THE LAKE

by

George Moore

W. D. Boyce

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BY

GEORGE MOORE

AUTHOR OF "EVELYN INNESS,"
"ESTHER WALTERS," ETC.

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THE LAKE

I

IT was one of those enticing days at the beginning of May when white clouds are drawn about the earth like curtains. The lake lay like a mirror that some one had breathed upon, the brown islands showing through the mist faintly, with gray shadows falling into the water, blurred at the edges. The ducks were talking softly in the reeds, the reeds themselves were talking; and the water lapped softly about the smooth limestone shores. But there was an impulse in the gentle day, and, turning from the sandy spit, Father Oliver walked to and fro along the disused cart track about the edge of the wood, asking himself if he were going home, knowing quite well that he could not bring himself to interview his parishioners that morning. On a sudden resolve to escape from anyone that might be seeking him, he went into the wood and lay down on the warm grass, and admired the thickly tasseled branches of the tall larches swinging above him.

Among them a bird uttered a cry like two stones clinked sharply together, and getting up he followed the bird, trying to catch sight of it, but always failing to

do so; it seemed to range in a circle about certain trees, and he hadn't gone very far when he heard it behind him. A stonechat he was sure it must be, and he wandered on till he came to a great silver fir, and thought that he spied a pigeon's nest among the multitudinous branches. The nest, if it were one, was about sixty feet from the ground, perhaps more than that; and, remembering that the great fir had grown out of a single seed, it seemed to him not at all wonderful that people had once worshiped trees, so mysterious is their life, and so remote from ours. He stood a long time looking up, hardly able to resist the temptation to climb the tree—not to rob the nest like a boy, but to admire the two gray eggs which he would find lying on some bare twigs.

At the edge of the wood there were some chestnuts and sycamores. He noticed that the large-patterned leaf of the sycamores, hanging out from a longer stem, was darker than the chestnut leaf. There were some elms close by, and their half-opened leaves, dainty and frail, reminded him of clouds of butterflies. He could think of nothing else. White, cottonlike clouds unfolded above the blossoming trees; patches of blue appeared and disappeared; and he wandered on again, beguiled this time by many errant scents and willful little breezes.

Very soon he came upon some fields, and as he walked through the ferns the young rabbits ran from under his feet, and he thought of the delicious meals that the fox would snap up. He had to pick his way, for thorn bushes and hazels were springing up every-

where. Derrinrush, the great headland stretching nearly a mile into the lake, said to be one of the original forests, was extending inland. He remembered it as a deep, religious wood, with its own particular smell of reeds and rushes. It went farther back than the island castles, farther back than the Druids, and this wood was among Father Oliver's earliest recollections. He and his brother James used to go there when they were boys to cut the hazel stems, out of which they made fishing rods; and one had only to turn over the dead leaves to discover the chips scattered circlewise in the open spaces where the coopers used to sit making hoops for barrels. But iron hoops were now used instead of hazel, and the coopers came there no more. In the old days he and his brother James used to follow the wood-ranger, asking him questions about the wild creatures of the wood—badgers, marten cats, and otters. One day they took home a nest of young hawks. He did not neglect to feed them, but they had eaten each other, nevertheless. He forgot what became of the last one.

A thick yellow smell hung on the still air. "A fox," he said, and he trailed the animal through the hazel bushes till he came to the shore. His chase had led him to a rough shore, covered with juniper bushes and tussocked grass, the extreme point of the headland, whence he could see the mountains—the pale southern mountains mingling with the white sky, and the western mountains, much nearer, showing in bold relief. The beautiful motion and variety of the hills delighted him, and there was as much various color as there were many

dips and curves, for the hills were not far enough away to dwindle to one blue tint; they were blue, but the pink heather showed through the blue, and the clouds continued to fold and unfold, so that neither the color nor the lines were ever the same. The retreating and advancing of the great masses and the delicate illumination of the crests could be watched without weariness. It was like listening to music. Slieve Cairn showed straight as a bull's back against the white sky; a cloud filled the gap between Slieve Cairn and Slieve Louan, a quaint little hill like a hunchback going down a road. Slieve Louan was followed by a great boulderlike hill turned sideways, the top indented like a crater, and the priest likened the long, low profile of the next hill to a reptile raising itself on its forepaws.

He stood at gaze, bewitched by the play of light and shadow among the slopes; and when he turned toward the lake again, he was surprised to see a yacht by Castle Island. The breeze that had just sprung up had borne her so far: now she lay becalmed. She carried, without doubt, a pleasure-party, inspired by some vague interest in ruins, and a very real interest in lunch; or the yacht's destination might be Kilronan Abbey, and the priest wondered if there were water enough in the strait to let her through in this season of the year. The sails flapped in the intermittent breeze, and he began to calculate her tonnage, certain that if he had such a boat he would not be sailing her on a lake, but on the bright sea, out of sight of land, in the middle of a great circle of water. As if stung by a sudden sense of the sea, of

its perfume and its freedom, he imagined the filling of the sails and the rattle of the ropes, and how a fair wind would carry him as far as the Cove of Cork before morning. The run from Cork to Liverpool would be slower, but the wind might veer a little, and in four-and-twenty hours the Welsh mountains would begin to show above the horizon. But he would not land anywhere on the Welsh coast. There was nothing to see in Wales but castles, and he was weary of castles, and longed to see the cathedrals of York and Salisbury; for he had often seen them in pictures, and had more than once thought of a walking tour through England. Better still if the yacht were to land him somewhere on the French coast. England was, after all, only an island like Ireland—a little larger, but still an island—and he thought he would like a continent to roam in. The French cathedrals were more beautiful than the English, and it would be pleasant to wander in the French country in happy-go-lucky fashion, resting when one was tired, walking when it pleased one, taking an interest in whatever might strike one's fancy.

It seemed to him that his desire was to be freed for a while from everything he had ever seen, and from everything he had ever heard. He just wanted to wander, admiring everything there was to admire as he went. He didn't want to learn anything, only to admire. He was weary of argument, religious and political. It wasn't that he was indifferent to his country's welfare, but every mind requires rest, and he wished himself away in a foreign country, distracted every moment by new

things, learning the language out of a volume of songs, and hearing music, any music, French or German—any music but Irish music. He sighed, and wondered why he sighed. Was it because he feared that if he once went away he might never come back?

This lake was beautiful, but he was tired of its low gray shores; he was tired of those mountains, melancholy as Irish melodies, and as beautiful. He felt suddenly that he didn't want to see a lake or a mountain for two months at least, and that his longing for a change was legitimate and most natural. It pleased him to remember that everyone likes to get out of his native country for a while. But he had never been out of sight of this lake except the years he had spent in Maynooth. When he left Maynooth he had pleaded that he might be sent to live among the mountains by Kilronan Abbey, at the north end of the lake . . . when Father Conway died he had been moved round to the western shore. Every day of his life he walked by the lake; there was nowhere else to walk, unless up and down the lawn under the sycamores, imitating Father Peter, who used to walk there, reading his breviary, stopping from time to time to speak to a parishioner in the road below; he, too, used to read his breviary under the sycamores; but for one reason or another he walked there no longer, and now every afternoon found him standing at the end of this sandy spit, looking across the lake toward Tinnick, where he was born, and where his sisters lived.

He couldn't see the walls of the convent to-day, there was too much mist about . . . and he liked to see

them; for whenever he saw them he began to think of his sister Eliza, and he liked to think of her—she was his favorite sister. They were nearly the same age, and had played together; and his eyes dwelt in imagination on the dark corner under the stairs where they used to play. He could even see their toys through the years, and the tall clock which used to tell them that it was time to put them aside. Eliza was only eighteen months older than he; they were the red-haired ones, and though they were as different in mind as it was possible to be, he seemed nearer Eliza than anyone else. In what this affinity consisted he couldn't say, but he had always felt himself of the same flesh and blood. Neither his father nor mother had inspired this sense of affinity; his sister Mary and his brothers seemed to him merely people whom he had known always—not more than that; whereas Eliza was quite different, and perhaps it was this very mutuality, which he could not define, that had decided their vocations.

No doubt there is a moment in everyone's life when something happens to turn him into the road which he is destined to follow; for all that it would be superficial to think that the fate of one's life is dependent upon accident. The accident that turns one into the road is only the means which Providence takes to procure the working out of certain ends. Accidents are many: life is as full of accidents as a fire is full of sparks, and any spark will suffice to set fire to the train. The train escapes a thousand, but at last a spark lights it, and this spark always seems to us the only

one that could have done it. . . . We cannot imagine how the same result could have been otherwise obtained. But other ways would have been found; for Nature is full of resource, and if Eliza had not been by to fire the idea hidden in him, something else would. She was the accident, only the accident, for no man escapes his vocation, and the priesthood was his. A vocation always finds a way out. But was he sure if it hadn't been for Eliza that he would have married Annie McGrath? He didn't think he would have married Annie, but he might have married another. Annie was a pleasant, merry girl, a girl that everyone was sure would make a good wife for any man, and at that time many people were thinking that he should marry Annie. And looking back he couldn't honestly say that a stray thought of Annie hadn't found its way into his mind; but not into his heart—there is a difference.

At that time he was what is known as a growing lad; he was seventeen. His father had been dead two years, and his mother looked to him, he being the eldest, to take charge of the shop, for at that time it was almost settled that James was to go to America. They had two or three nice grass farms just beyond the town: Patsy was going to have them; and his sisters' fortunes were in the bank, and very good fortunes they were. They had a hundred pounds apiece and should have married well. Eliza could have married whomever she pleased. Mary could have married, too, and to this day he couldn't tell why she hadn't married.

The chances his sister Mary had missed rose up in

his mind—why, he did not know; and a little bored by these memories, he suddenly became absorbed in the little bleat of a blackcap perched on an alder bush; the bush was the only one amid a bed of flags and rushes. "His mate is sitting on her eggs, and there are some woodgatherers about; that is what is worrying the little fellow." The bird continued to utter its troubled bleat, and the priest walked on, thinking how different was its evensong. He meditated an excursion to hear it, and then, without his being aware of any transition, his thoughts returned to his sister Mary, and to the time when he had once indulged in hopes that the mills along the riverside might be rebuilt and Tinnick restored to its former commercial prosperity. He was not certain if he had ever really believed that he might set these mills going, or if he had, he encouraged an illusion, knowing it to be one. He was only certain of this, that when he was a boy and saw no life ahead of him except that of a Tinnick shopman, he used to feel that if he remained at home he must have the excitement of speculation. The beautiful river, with its lime trees, appealed to his imagination; the rebuilding of the mills and the reorganization of trade, if he succeeded in reorganizing trade, would mean spending his mornings on the wharfs by the riverside, and in those days his one desire was to escape from the shop. He looked upon the shop as a prison. In those days he liked dreaming, and it was pleasant to dream of giving back to Tinnick its trade of former days; but when his mother asked him what steps he intended to take to get the necessary capital,

he used to get angry with her. He must have known that he could never make enough money in the shop to set the mills working! He must have known that he would never take his father's place at the desk by the dusty window! But if he had shrunk from an avowal it was because he had no other proposal to make. His mother had understood him, though the others had not, and seeing his inability to say what kind of work he would put his hand to, she had spoken of Annie McGrath. She hadn't said he should marry Annie—she was a clever woman in her way—she had merely said that Annie had relations in America who could afford to supply sufficient capital to start one of the mills. But he had never wanted to marry Annie; he used to get cross when the subject was mentioned, and used to tell his mother that if the mills were to pay it would be necessary to start business on a large scale. He was an impossible, impracticable lad and he couldn't help smiling, for the thought crossed his mind suddenly how he used to go down to the riverside to find a new argument wherewith to confute his mother; and when he had found one he would return happy, and sit watching for an opportunity to raise the question again.

No, it wasn't because Annie's relations weren't rich enough that he hadn't wanted to marry her. And to account for his prejudice against marriage, he must suppose that some notion of the priesthood was stirring in him at the time, for one day, as he sat looking at Annie across the tea table, he couldn't help thinking that it would be hard to live alongside of her in the shop,

year in and year out. His mother would die, children would be born, and Annie, though a good girl and a pleasant girl, was a bit tiresome to listen to, nor was she one of those who improve with age. As he had sat looking at her, he seemed to understand, as he had never understood before, that if he married her all that had happened before would happen again—children scrambling about the counter, and himself by the dusty window putting his pen behind his ear, just as his father used to do when he came forward to serve some country woman with half a pound of tea or a hank of onions.

As these thoughts were passing through his mind, he had heard his mother saying that Annie's sister was thinking of starting dressmaking in the High Street, and how nice it would be for Eliza to join her! Eliza had just laid aside a skirt she had been turning, and she raised her eyes and stared at her mother, as if she were surprised her mother could say anything so stupid. "I'm going to be a nun," she had said, and, just as if she didn't wish to answer any questions, she had continued her sewing. Well might they be surprised, for not one of them had suspected Eliza of religious inclinations. She wasn't more pious than another, and they asked her if she were joking. She looked at them as if she thought the suggestion very stupid, and they dared not ask her any more questions.

She wasn't more than fifteen at the time, yet she had spoken out of an inalterable resolution. No, he wouldn't say that; an inalterable resolution meant that she had considered the matter, and a child of fifteen

doesn't consider. But a child of fifteen may *know,* and after he had seen the look which greeted his mother's question, and heard Eliza's simple answer, "I've decided to be a nun," he had never a doubt that what she said was true. And from that day she became for him a different being; and when she told him, feeling, perhaps, that he sympathized with her more than the others did, that one day she would be Reverend Mother of the Tinnick Convent, he felt convinced that she knew what she was saying—how she knew he could not say.

His childhood had been a slumber, with occasional awakenings or half awakenings, and Eliza's announcement that she intended to enter the religious life was the first real awakening; and this awakening first took the form of an acute interest in Eliza's character, and, persuaded that she or her prototype had already existed, he had searched the lives of the saints for an account of her. He had found many partial portraits of her; certain typical traits in the lives of three or four saints reminded him of Eliza, but there was no complete portrait. The strangest part of the business was that he traced his vocation to his search for Eliza in the lives of the saints. Everything that had happened afterward was the emotional sequence of taking down the books from the shelf. He didn't exaggerate; it was quite possible his life might have taken quite a different turn, for up to that time he had only read books of adventure—stories about robbers and pirates. As if by magic, his interest in such stories had been removed from his mind; he had been seized by an extraordinary enthusiasm for

saints, who by renouncement of animal life had contrived to steal up to the last bounds, whence they could see into the eternal life that lies beyond the grave. Once this power was admitted, what interest could we find in the feeble ambitions of temporal life, whose scope is limited to three score and ten years? And who could doubt that the saints had attained the eternal life, which is God, while still living in the temporal flesh? For did not the miracles of the saints prove that they were no longer subject to natural laws? Ireland, perhaps, more than any other country, had understood the supremacy of spirit over matter, and had striven to escape through mortifications from the prison of the flesh. Without doubt great numbers in Ireland had fled from the torment of actual life into the wilderness. If the shore and the islands on this lake were dotted with fortress castles, it was the Welsh and the Normans who had built them. . . . The priest remembered how his mind had inflamed when he first heard of the hermit who had lived in Church Island, and how disappointed he had been when he heard that Church Island was ten miles away, at the farther end of the lake.

He could not row himself so far, and distance and danger had restricted his youthful fancy to the islands facing Tinnick. These were two large islands covered with brushwood, ugly brown patches—ugly as their names; they were known as Horse Island and Hog Island, and never had they appealed to his fancy. But Castle Island had always seemed to be a suitable island for a hermitage, far more so than Castle Hag. Castle

Hag was too small and bleak even to engage the attention of a sixth-century hermit. But there were trees on Castle Island, and out of the ruins of the castle a comfortable sheiling could be built, and the ground thus freed from the ruins of the Welshman's castle might be cultivated. He remembered commandeering the fisherman's boat, and rowing himself out there, taking a tape to measure, and how, after much application of the tape, he had satisfied himself that there was enough arable land in the island for a garden. He had walked down the island certain that a quarter of an acre should grow enough vegetables to support a hermit, and that a goat would be able to pick a living among the bushes and the tussocked grass; for even a hermit might have a goat, and he didn't think he could live without milk.

When he pushed his way through the bushes the appearance of the lake frightened him; it was full of blustering waves, and it wasn't likely he'd ever forget his struggle to get the boat back to Tinnick. He left it where he had found it, at the mouth of the river by the fisherman's hut, and he returned home thinking how he would have to import a little hay occasionally for the goat. Nor would this be all; he would have to go on shore every Sunday to hear Mass, unless he built a chapel. The hermit of Church Island had an oratory in which he said Mass! But if he left his island every Sunday his hermitage would be a mockery. For the moment he couldn't see how he was to build a chapel—a sheiling, perhaps; a chapel was out of the question, he feared.

He would have to have vestments and a chalice, and, immersed in the difficulty of obtaining these, he walked home, taking the path along the river from habit, not because he wished to consider afresh the problems of the ruined mills. The dream of restoring Tinnick to its commerce of former days was forgotten, and he walked on, thinking of his chalice, until he heard somebody call him. It was Eliza, and as the two of them leaned over the parapet of the bridge, he had not been able to keep himself from telling her that he had rowed himself out to Castle Island, never thinking that she would reprove him, and sternly, for taking the fisherman's boat without asking leave. It was no use to argue with Eliza that the fisherman didn't want his boat, the day being too rough for fishing. What did she know about fishing? She had asked very sharply what had brought him out to Castle Island on such a day. There was no use saying he didn't know; he had never been able to keep a secret from Eliza, and feeling that he must confide in somebody, he had told her he was tired of living at home, and was thinking of building a sheiling on the island.

Eliza hadn't understood, and she understood still less when he spoke of a beehive hut, such as the ancient hermits of Ireland used to live in. She was entirely without imagination; but what had surprised him still more than her lack of sympathy with his dream project was her inability to understand an idea so inherent in Christianity as the hermitage, for at that time Eliza had decided to enter the religious life. He had waited a

long time for her answer, but the only answer she had made was that in the early centuries a man was a bandit or a hermit. This wasn't true: life was peaceful in Ireland in the sixth and seventh centuries; even if it weren't, she ought to have understood that change of circumstance cannot alter an idea so inherent in man as the hermitage, and when he asked her if she intended to found a new order, or to go out to Patagonia to teach the Indians, she laughed, saying she was much more interested in a laundry than in the Indians. Her plea that the Tinnick Convent was always in straits for money did not appeal to him then any more than it did to-day.

"The officers in Tinnick have to send their washing to Dublin."

"A fine reason for entering a convent."

But quite unmoved by the sarcasm, she had answered that it is very difficult for a woman to do anything unless she is a member of a congregation that can help her to do things. Nor had his suggestion that the object of the religious life is meditation embarrassed her in the least, and he remembered well how she had said:

"Putting aside for the moment the important question whether there may or may not be hermits in the twentieth century, tell me, Oliver, are you thinking of marrying Annie McGrath? You know she has rich relations in America, and you might get them to supply the capital to set the mills going. The mills would be a great advantage. Annie has a good headpiece, and

would be able to take the shop off your hands, leaving you free to look after the mills."

"The mills, Eliza! there are other things in the world besides those mills!"

"A hermitage on Castle Island?"

Eliza could be very impertinent when she liked. If she weren't interested in what one was saying, she looked round, displaying an irritating curiosity in every passer-by. She had drawn his attention to the ducks on the river while he was telling her of the great change that had come over him, and he had felt like boxing her ears. But the moment he began to speak of taking Orders she forgot all about the ducks; her eyes were fixed upon him, she listened to his every word, and when he had finished speaking, she reminded him there had always been a priest in the family. All her wits were awake. He was the one of the family who had shown most aptitude for learning, and their cousin, the bishop, would be able to help him. What she would like would be to see him parish priest of Tinnick. The parish was one of the best in the diocese. Not a doubt of it, she was thinking at that moment of the advantage this arrangement would be to her when she was directing the affairs of the convent.

If there was no other, there was at least one woman in Ireland who was interested in things. He had never met anyone less interested in opinions or in ideas than Eliza. They had walked home together in silence, at all events not saying much, and that very evening she left the room immediately after supper. They had heard

sounds of trunks being dragged along the passage; furniture was being moved, and when she came downstairs she just said she was going to sleep with Mary.

"Oliver is going to have my room. He must have a room to himself on account of his studies."

On that she had gathered up her sewing, and had left him to explain. He had felt that it was rather sly of her to go away like that, leaving all the explanation to him. She wanted him to be a priest, and was full of little tricks. There was no time for further consideration. There was only just time to prepare for the examination. He had worked hard, for his work interested him, especially the Latin language; but what interested him far more than his aptitude for learning whatever he had made up his mind to learn was the discovery of a religious vocation in himself. Eliza had feared that his interest in hermits sprang from a boyish taste for adventure rather than from religious feeling, but no sooner had he begun his studies for the priesthood, than he found himself overtaken and overpowered by an extraordinary religious fervor and by a desire for prayer and discipline. Never had a boy left home more zealous, more desirous to excel in piety and to strive for the honor and glory of the Church.

An expression of anger, almost of hatred, passed over Father Oliver's face, and he turned from the lake and walked a few yards rapidly, hoping to escape from remembrance of his folly; for he had made a great fool of himself, no doubt. But, after all, he preferred his enthusiasms, however exaggerated they might seem to him

now, to the commonplace—he could not call it wisdom—of those whom he had taken into his confidence. It was foolish of him, no doubt, to have told how he used to go out in a boat and measure the ground about Castle Island, thinking to build himself a beehive hut out of the ruins. He knew too little of the world at that time; he had no idea how incapable these students were of understanding anything outside the narrow interests of conventional life. Anyhow, he had had the satisfaction of having beaten them in all the examinations; and if he had cared to go on for advancement, he could have easily got ahead of them all, for he had better brains and better interest than any of them. When he last saw that ignorant brute Peter Fahy, Fahy asked him if he still put pebbles in his shoes. It was to Fahy he had confided the cause of his lameness, and Fahy had told on him; he was disgracefully innocent in those days, and he could still see them gathered about him, pretending not to believe that he kept a cat-o'-nine-tails in his room, and scourged himself at night. It was Tom Bryan who said that he wouldn't mind betting a couple of shillings that Gogarty's whip wouldn't draw a squeal from a pig on the roadside. The answer to that was: "A touch will make a pig squeal: you should have said an ass!" But at the moment he couldn't think of an answer.

No doubt everyone looked on him as a ninny, and they had persuaded him to prove to them that his whip was a real whip by letting Tom Bryan do the whipping for him. Tom Bryan was a rough fellow, who ought to have been driving a plow; a plowman's life was too peace-

ful an occupation for him—a drover's life would have suited him best, prodding his cattle along the road with a goad; it was said that was how he maintained his authority in the parish. The remembrance of the day he had bared his back to that fellow was still a bitter one. With a gentle smile he had handed the whip to Tom Bryan, the very smile which he imagined the hermits of old time used to wear. The first blow had so stunned him that he couldn't cry out, and this blow was followed by a second which sent the blood flaming through his veins, and then by another which brought all the blood into one point in his body. He seemed to lose consciousness of everything but three inches of back. Nine blows he had borne without wincing; the tenth overcame his fortitude, and he had reeled away from Tom Bryan.

Tom had exchanged the whip he had given him for a great leather belt; that was why he had been hurt so grievously—hurt till the pain seemed to reach his very heart. Tom had belted him with all his strength; and half a dozen of Tom's pals were waiting outside the door, and they came into the room, their wide mouths agrin, asking him how he liked it. But they were unprepared for the pain his face expressed, and in the midst of his agony he noticed that already they foresaw consequences, and he heard them reprove Tom Bryan, their intention being to disassociate themselves from him. Cowards! cowards! cowards!

They tried to help him on with his shirt, but he had been too badly beaten, and Tom Bryan came up in the evening to ask him not to tell on him. He promised,

and he wouldn't have told if he could have helped it. But some explanation had to be forthcoming—he couldn't lie on his back. The doctor was sent for. . . .

And next day he was told the president wished to see him. The president was Eliza over again; hermits and hermitages were all very well in the early centuries, but religion had advanced, and nowadays a steadfast piety was more suited to modern requirements than pebbles in the shoes. If it had been possible to leave for America that day he thought he would have gone. But he couldn't leave Maynooth because he had been fool enough to bare his back to Tom Bryan. He couldn't return home to tell such a story as that. All Tinnick would be laughing at him, and Eliza, what would she think of him? He wasn't such a fool as the Maynooth students thought him, and he had realized at once that he must stay in Maynooth and live down remembrance of his folly. So, as the saying goes, he had taken the bit between his teeth.

The necessity of living down his first folly, of creating a new idea of himself in the minds of the students, had forced him to apply all his intelligence to his studies, and he had made extraordinary progress in the first years. The recollection of the ease with which he had outdistanced his fellow students was as pleasant as the breezes about the lake, and his thoughts dwelt on the opinion which he knew had been entertained, that for many years there had not been anyone at Maynooth who had shown such aptitude for scholarship. He had only to look at a book to know more about it than his fellow

students would know if they were to spend days over it. He had won honors. He could have won greater honors if his conscience had not reminded him that the gifts he had received from God had not been bestowed upon him for the mere purpose of humiliating his fellow students. He used to feel then that if certain talents had been given to him, they had been given to him to use for the greater glory of God rather than for his own glorification. He used to feel there was nothing more hateful in God's sight than intellectual, unless perhaps spiritual, pride, and his object during his last years at Maynooth had been to exhibit himself to the least advantage.

It is strange how an idea enters the soul and remakes it, and when he left Maynooth he had used his influence with his cousin, the bishop, to get himself appointed to the poorest parish in Connaught. Eliza had to dissemble, but he knew that in her heart she was furious with him. We are all extraordinarily different one from another, and if we seem most different from those whom we are most like, it is because we know nothing at all about strangers. He had gone to Kilronan in spite of Eliza, in spite of everyone, their cousin, the bishop, included. He had been very happy in Bridget Clery's cottage, so happy that he didn't know himself why he had ever consented to leave Kilronan.

No, it was not because he was too happy there. He had to a certain extent outgrown his very delicate conscience.

II

A BREEZE rose, the forest murmured, a bird sang, the sails of the yacht filled, and the priest watched her disappear behind a rocky headland. He knew now that her destination was Kilronan Abbey. But would she be able to get through the strait? For at this season of the year there was hardly a sufficient depth of water to float a boat of her size. If she stuck, the picnic party would get into the small boat, and, thus lightened, the yacht might be floated into the other arm of the lake. "A pleasant day indeed for a sail," and in imagination he followed the yacht down the lake, past its different castles, Castle Carra and Castle Burke and Church Island, the island on which Marban—Marban, the famous hermit poet—had lived.

It seemed to him strange that he had never thought of visiting the ruined church when he lived close by at the northern end of the lake. His time used to be entirely taken up with attending to the wants of his poor people, and the first year he spent in Garranard he had thought only of the possibility of inducing the Government to build a bridge across the strait. That bridge was badly wanted. All the western side of the lake was cut off from railway communication. Tinnick was the terminus, but to get to Tinnick one had to go round the

lake, either by the northern or the southern end, and it was always a question which was the longer road—round by Kilronan Abbey or by the Bridge of Keel. Many people said the southern road was shorter, but the difference wasn't more than a mile, if that, and Father Oliver preferred the northern road; for it took him by his curate's house, and he could always stop there and give his horse a feed and a rest, and he liked to revisit the abbey in which he had said Mass for so long, and in which Mass had always been said for a thousand years, even since Cromwell had unroofed it, the celebrant sheltered by an arch, the congregation kneeling under the open sky, whether it rained or snowed.

The roofing of the abbey and the bridging of the strait were the two things that the parish was really interested in. He had tried when he was in Kilronan to obtain the archbishop's consent and collaboration; Moran was trying now: he did not know that he was succeeding any better; and Father Oliver reflected a while on the peculiar temperament of their diocesan, and getting down from the rock on which he had been sitting, he wandered along the sunny shore, thinking of the many letters he had addressed to the Board of Works on the subject of the bridge. The board believed, or pretended to believe, that the parish could not afford the bridge; as well might it be urged that a cripple could not afford crutches. Without doubt a public meeting should be held; and in some little indignation Father Oliver began to think that public opinion should be roused and organized. It was for him to do this: he was the people's natural leader; but

for many months he had done nothing in the matter. Why, he didn't know himself. Perhaps he needed a holiday; perhaps he no longer believed the Government susceptible to public opinion; perhaps he had lost faith in the people themselves! The people were the same always; the people never change, only individuals change.

And at the end of the sandy spit, where some pines had grown and seeded, he stood looking across the silvery lake wondering if his parishioners had begun to notice the change that had come over him since Rose Leicester left the parish. As her name came into his mind his thoughts were interrupted by the sound of voices, and turning from the lake, he saw two wood gatherers coming down a little path through the juniper bushes. He often hid himself in the woods when he saw somebody coming, but he couldn't do so now without betraying his intention, and he stayed where he was. The women passed on, bent under their loads. Whether they saw him or not he couldn't tell; they passed near enough for him to recognize them, and he remembered that they were in church the day he had alluded to Rose Leicester in his sermon. A hundred yards farther on the women put down their loads and sat down to rest, and Father Oliver began to think what their conversation might be. His habit of wandering away by himself had no doubt been noticed, and once it was noticed it would become a topic of conversation. "And what they are saying now is, 'Ah, sure, he never has been the same man since he preached against the schoolmistress. And what should he be doing by the lake if fear that she has

made away with herself weren't on his mind?' And perhaps they are right," he said to himself; and he walked up the shore, hoping that as soon as he was out of sight the women would cease to speak of him and Rose Leicester.

All the morning he had been trying to avoid thinking of her, but now, as he rambled, he could not put back the memory of the day he had met her for the first time. It was in the summer, as nearly as possible two years ago. To-day was the fifteenth of May; it was certainly later in the year. It must have been in June, for the day was very hot, and he had been riding fast, not wishing to keep Catherine's dinner waiting. As he pushed his bicycle through the gate, he saw the great cheery man, Father Peter, with a face like an apple, walking up and down under the sycamores reading his breviary, and to this moment he could hear his loud, rough voice, and feel the grasp of his great hand. But he was earlier than he expected, and Father Peter said that Catherine would sign to them when her dinner was ready, and they had walked in the pleasant shade of the trees.

It must have been in June, for the mowers were in the field opposite, in the field known as the priest's field, though Father Peter had never rented it. There had never been such weather in Ireland before; the sky was like boiled starch, and he remembered how eagerly he listened to Father Peter, who was telling how excellently well the new schoolmistress played the harmonium, and how beautifully she had sung last Sunday at Mass. Her musical talents could not interest Father Peter, for he

was without an ear or taste for music. That was right enough, but what Father Oliver didn't understand was why her music should stand in her way, she being in everything else able and competent. Nor was it her music that stood in her way, as he discovered later, but her looks and her spinsterhood, for a good-looking, unmarried girl, according to Father Peter, was a danger in a parish. Father Oliver remembered distinctly the trouble that Father Peter's words had caused him. It was just as if a vapor had arisen, and he couldn't see clearly. That was all; it might be just as Father Peter had said: it certainly was, as he knew to his cost, but at the time he hadn't understood, or rather he had been troubled—that was it. He hadn't answered Father Peter, and they walked on a few yards, and Father Peter nudged him, and said under his breath, "Here is the young woman herself coming across the field." And he looked that way and saw Rose Leicester coming across the field toward the stile. The stile was an open one, and she twisted herself through it. Father Peter called her, and as she stood in the road below, Father Oliver had admired a thin, freckled face, with a pretty, straight nose and gray, sparkling eyes. All his sympathy had gone out to her, for it seemed to him a disgrace that she should not be allowed to keep her situation because God had given her a larger share of good looks than any other woman in the parish. And what made the injustice seem more flagrant was that, notwithstanding all that Father Peter might say to the contrary, there was no doubt that her harmonium playing and her singing prejudiced her in

this unmusical priest's eyes. And why? Because a beautiful voice is an attraction in itself!

He couldn't tell how it was, but his whole nature had suddenly and instinctively rebelled against the decision that she should not be allowed to remain in the parish. But he hadn't been able to influence Father Peter; he had seen clearly that sooner or later she would have to go. And he had left Father Peter earlier than usual that evening, and all the way home, as he rode down the lonely roads, he thought of the misfortune that pretty red hair and gray eyes had brought upon Rose Leicester. Everything about her was attractive and winning, even her name, and he wasn't sure that her very English name had not prejudiced her chances of keeping her situation. He had to admit that she did not dress very wisely; she dressed too well for her station, and he remembered how she held the handle of her blue-silk parasol between forefinger and thumb. Her hair wasn't red, though there was red in it; and it was three days after that he discovered the real color of her hair; it was blond. He had met her about two miles from Garranard. He was on his bicycle and she was on hers, and they had leaped instinctively from their machines. What had impressed him this time, far more than her looks, was her happiness. He had never seen a happy face before, and while they talked by the roadside he was thinking of the great cruelty and the shame it would be to bring tears to those happy eyes. And she would be sent away without being told why she was sent away! Which would be perhaps the greatest cruelty of all.

They had seemed unable to get away from each other, so much had they to say. He had mentioned his brother James. He was doing well in America, and would perhaps one day send them the price of a harmonium. She had told him she couldn't play on the wheezy old thing at Garranard. At the moment he clean forgot that the new harmonium would avail her little, since Father Peter was going to get rid of her; he only remembered it as he got on his bicycle, and he returned home ready to espouse her cause against everyone.

She must write to the archbishop, and if he wouldn't do anything she must write to the papers. Influence must be brought to bear, and Father Peter must be prevented from perpetrating a gross injustice. He had felt that it would be impossible for him to remain Father Peter's curate if the schoolmistress were sent away for no fault of hers, merely because she was a nice-looking girl with a refined and cultivated taste for music. What Father Peter would have done if he had lived no one would ever know. In however summary and unwarranted a way he might have dismissed her, the injustice would have been slight compared with what had happened to her.

The memory of the wrong he had done her put such a pain into his heart that he stopped; he stood like one dazed or daft; he seemed to lose sight of everything; he heard nothing till a fish leaping in the languid lake awoke him, and he walked on, absorbed in the clear conception of his mistake, his thoughts swinging back to the day he had met her on the roadside, and to the events

that succeeded their meeting. Father Peter had been taken ill, two days after he was dead, before the end of the week he was in his coffin; and the same fate might be his to-morrow or the next day. Life is but a shadow, and the generations go by like shadows. Very wonderful is life's coming and going, but however rapidly life passes, there is always time for wrongdoing; and only time for repentance is short. Atonement may be withheld. We always atone sooner or later; the question is in what world do we atone for the sin. But he had committed no sin, only an error of judgment. However this might be, there had been no peace of mind for him ever since.

No doubt other men had committed faults as grave as his; but they had had the strength to leave the matter in the hands of God, to say: "I can do nothing, I must put myself in the hands of God; let Him judge: He is all wise." He hadn't their force of character. He believed as firmly as they did, but, for some reason which he couldn't explain to himself, he couldn't leave the matter in God's hands, and was always thinking how he could get news of her.

If it hadn't been for that woman, for that detestable Mrs. O'Mara, she who had been the cause of so much evil in the parish. . . . And his heart was full of a hatred so black that it surprised him, and he asked himself if he could ever forgive that woman. God might, he couldn't. And he fell to thinking how Mrs. O'Mara had long been a curse upon the parish. Father Peter had

often to speak about her from the altar, and, she listening to him, he had explained that the stories she had set going were untrue. Father Peter had warned him, but warnings are no good; he had listened to him convinced at the time that it was wrong and foolish to listen to scandal mongers. But what had he done in spite of Father Peter's warning—fool that he was, that he had been? There was no use going over the wretched story again; he was weary of going over it, and he tried to put it out of his mind. But it wouldn't be put out of his mind, and in spite of himself he began to recall the events of the day when she had asked to see him. He had been out all the morning, walking about with an engineer who had been sent down by the Board of Works to consider the possibility of building the bridge, and had just come in to rest. Catherine had brought him a cup of tea; he was sitting by the window, nearly too tired to drink it. The door was flung open. If Catherine had only asked him if he were at home to visitors, he would probably have said he wasn't at home to Mrs. O'Mara; but he hadn't been asked, and he remembered how disagreeably her appearance had impressed him as she came into the room. But she had an interesting way of talking—that is the danger of such women; they are generally good talkers, and the listener is entrapped before he is aware of it. She knew all about the engineer, who his father and mother were; she had stories to tell about their marriage, and how he had got his appointment, and what his qualifications were. It is easy to say one shouldn't listen to such people, but he remembered

well why he didn't cut short the interview—she might be bringing some important information that might be of use to him. So he had listened, and when the bridge, and the immense advantage of it, had been discussed sufficiently, she told him she had been staying at the convent. Any news of Eliza interested him, and Father Oliver marveled at the amount of tittle-tattle that Mrs. O'Mara had gathered up.

She had tales to tell about all the nuns and about all the pupils. She told him that half the Catholic families in Ireland had promised to send their daughters to Tinnick if Eliza had succeeded in finding some one who could teach music and singing. But Eliza didn't think there was anyone in the country qualified for the post but Rose Leicester. If Mrs. O'Mara could be believed, Eliza had said that she could offer Rose Leicester more money than she was earning in Garranard. Until then he had only half listened to Mrs. O'Mara's chatter, for he disliked the woman—her chatter only amused him as the chatter of a bird might; but when he heard that his sister was trying to get his schoolmistress away from him he had flared up. "Oh, but I don't think that your schoolmistress would suit a convent school. I shouldn't like my daughter—" "What do you mean?" Her face changed expression, and in her nasty mincing manner she had begun to throw out hints that Rose Leicester would not suit the nuns. He could see that she was concealing something—there was something at the back of her mind. Women of her sort want to be persuaded; their bits of scandal must be dragged

from them by force; they are the unwilling victims who would say nothing if they could help it. She had said enough to make it impossible to let matters stand as they were; he had had to ask her to speak out, and she began to speak about a certain man whom Rose used to meet on the hillside (she wouldn't give the man's name, she was too clever for that). She could only say that Rose had been seen on the hillside walking in lonely places with a man. Truly a detestable woman! His thoughts strayed from her for a moment, for it gave him pleasure to recollect that he had defended his schoolmistress. Didn't he say: "Now, then, Mrs. O'Mara, if you have anything definite to say, say it, but I won't listen to indefinite charges." "Charges—who is making charges?" she asked, and he had unfortunately called her a liar. In the middle of the tumult she had dropped a phrase: "Anyhow, her appearance is against her." And it was true that Rose Leicester's appearance had changed in the last few months. Seeing that her words had had a certain effect, Mrs. O'Mara quieted down; and while he stood wondering if it could possibly be true that Rose had deceived them, that she had been living in sin all these months, he had suddenly heard Mrs. O'Mara saying that he was lacking in experience—which was quite true, but her way of saying it had roused the devil in him. Who was she that she should come telling him that he lacked experience? To be sure, he wasn't an old midwife, and that's what Mrs. O'Mara looked like, sitting before him.

He had lost control of himself, saying, "Now, will

you get out of this house, you old scandal monger, or I'll take you by the shoulders and put you out!" And he had thrown the front door open. What a look she had given him as she passed out! At that moment the clock struck three. He remembered suddenly that the children were coming out of school. It would have been better if he had waited. But he couldn't wait: he'd have gone mad if he had waited; and he remembered how he had jumped into the road and squeezed through the stile; he had run across the field. "Why all this hurry?" he had asked himself.

She was locking up the desks, and the children went by him courtesying. He had to wait till the last one had gone. . . . Rose must have guessed his errand; he noticed that she had turned pale. "I've seen Mrs. O'Mara," he blurted out, "and she tells me that you've been seen walking with some man on the hillside in lonely places. . . . Don't deny it if it is true." "I'm not going to deny anything that is true." How brave she was! Her courage had attracted him and softened his heart. But everything was true, alas! and she had told him that her plans were to steal out of the parish without saying a word to anyone, for she was determined not to disgrace him or the parish. She was thinking of him in all her trouble, and everything might have ended well if he had not asked her who the man was. She would not say, nor give any reasons why she wouldn't do so. Only this, that if the man had deserted her she didn't want anyone to bring him back, if he could be brought back; if the man were dead it were better to say nothing about him.

"But if it were his fault?" "I don't see that that would make any difference."

They had gone out of the schoolhouse talking in quite a friendly way. There was a little drizzle in the air, and, opening her umbrella, she had said, "I'm afraid you'll get wet." "Get wet, get wet! what matter?" he had answered impatiently, for the remark annoyed him. By the hawthorn bush he had begun again to tell her that it would relieve his mind to know who the man was. She tried to get away from him, but he wouldn't let her go; and catching her by the arm he besought her, saying that it would relieve his mind. How many times had he said that? But he wasn't able to persuade her, notwithstanding his insistence that as a priest of the parish he had a right to know. No doubt she had some very deep reason for keeping her secret, or perhaps his authoritative manner was the cause of her silence. However this might be, any words would have been better than "it would relieve my mind to know who the man was." "Stupid, stupid, stupid!" he muttered to himself, and he wandered from the cart track into the wood.

It was impossible to say now why he had wished to press her secret from her. It would be unpleasant for him, as priest of the parish, to know that the man was living in the parish; but it would be still more unpleasant if he knew who the man was. Rose's seducer could be none other than one of the young soldiers who had taken the fishing lodge at the head of the lake. Mrs. O'Mara had hinted that Rose had been seen with one of them on the hill, and he thought how on a day like this she might

have been led away among the ferns. At that moment there came out of the thicket a floating ball of thistle down. "It bloweth where it listeth," he said. "Soldier or shepherd, what matter now she is gone?" and getting up from the grass and coming down the sloping lawn, overflowing with the shade of the larches, he climbed through the hawthorns growing out of a crumbled wall. Once more standing at the edge of the lake, he listened. He could only hear the tiresome clanking call of the stonechat, and he compared its reiterated call with the words "atonement," "forgiveness," "death," "calamity." These were always clanking in his heart. She might be lying at the bottom of the lake, and some day a white phantom might rise from the water and claim him.

His thoughts broke away, and he relived in memory the very agony of mind he had endured when he went home after her admission that she was with child. All that night, all next day, and for how many days? Would the time ever come when he could think of her without a pain in his heart? It is said that time brings forgetfulness. Does it? On Saturday morning he had sat at his window, asking himself if he should go down to see her or if he should send for her. There were confessions in the afternoon, and expecting that she would come to confess to him, he had not sent for her. One never knows; perhaps it was her absence from confession that had angered him. His temper had taken a different turn that evening. All night he had lain awake; he must have been a little mad that night, for he could only think of the loss of a soul to God, and of God's love of chastity.

All night long he had repeated with variations that it were better that all which our eyes see—this earth and the stars that are in being—should perish utterly, be crushed into dust, rather than a mortal sin should be committed. In an extraordinary lucidity of mind he had gone on thinking of God's anger, and his own responsibility toward God. Undoubtedly there are times when we lose control of our minds, when we are a little mad. He foresaw his danger, but he could not do otherwise than to get out of bed and begin to prepare his sermon, for he had to preach, and he could only preach on chastity and the displeasure sins against chastity cause God. He could think but of this one thing, the displeasure God must feel against Rose and the seducer who had robbed her of the virtue God prized most in her. He must have said things that he would not have said at any other time. His brain was on fire that morning, and words had risen to his lips—he knew not whence nor how they had come, and he had no idea now of what he had said. He only knew that she had left the church during his sermon; at what moment he did not know, nor did he know that she had left the parish till next day, when the children came up to tell him there was no schoolmistress. And from that day to this no news of her, nor any way of getting news of her.

His thoughts suddenly went to the hawthorn trees. He could not think of her any more for the moment, and it relieved his mind to examine the green pips that were beginning to appear among the leaves. "The hawthorns will be in flower in another week," he said; and he

began to wonder at the beautiful order of the spring. The pear and the cherry were the first; these were followed by the apple, and after the apple came the lilac, the chestnut, and the laburnum. The forest trees, too, had their order. The ash was still leafless, but it was shedding its catkins, and in another fifteen days its light foliage would be dancing in the breeze. The oak was last of all. At that moment a swallow flitted from stone to stone, too tired to fly far, and he wondered whence it had come. A cuckoo called from a distant hill; it, too, had been away and had come back.

His eyes dwelt on the lake, refined and wistful, with reflections of islands and reeds, mysteriously still. Rose-colored clouds descended, revealing many new and beautiful mountain forms, every pass and every crest distinguishable. It was the hour when the cormorants come home to roost, and he saw three black specks flying low above the glittering surface; rising from the water, they alighted with a flutter of wings on the corner wall of what remained of Castle Hag, "and they will sleep there till morning," he said, as he toiled up a little path, twisting through ferns and thorn bushes. At the top of the hill was his house, the house Father Peter had built. Its appearance displeased him, and he stood for a long time watching the evening darkening and the yacht being towed home, her sails lowered, the sailors in the rowing boat.

"They will be well tired before they get her back to Tinnick;" and he turned and entered his house abruptly.

III

CATHERINE'S curiosity was a worry. As if he knew why he hadn't come home to his dinner! If she'd just finish putting the plates on the table and leave him. Of course there had been callers. One man, the man he especially wished to see, had driven ten miles to see him. It was most unfortunate, but it couldn't be helped; he had felt that morning that he couldn't stay indoors—the business of the parish had somehow got upon his nerves, but not because he had been working hard. He had done but little work since she left the parish. Now was that story going to begin again? If it did, he should go out of his mind; and he looked round the room, thinking how a lonely evening breeds thoughts of discontent.

Most of the furniture in the room was Father Peter's. Father Peter had left his curate his furniture, but the pretty mahogany bookcase and the engravings upon the walls were Father Oliver's own taste; he had bought them at an auction, and there were times when these purchases pleased him. But now he was thinking that Father Peter must have known to whom the parish would go at his death, for he could not have meant all his furniture to be taken out of the house—"there would be no room for it in Bridget Clery's cottage;" and Father Oliver sat thinking of the evenings he used to spend with

Father Peter. How often during those evenings Father Peter must have said to himself, "One day, Gogarty, you will be sitting in my chair and sleeping in my bed." And Father Oliver pondered on his affection for the dead man. There had been no differences of opinion, only one—the neglected garden at the back of the house; and, smiling sadly, Father Oliver remembered how he used to reprove the parish priest.

"I'm afraid I'm too big and too fat and too fond of my pipe and my glass of whisky to care much about carnations. But if you get the parish when I'm gone, I'm sure you'll grow some beauties, and you'll put a bunch on my grave sometimes, Gogarty." The very ring of the dead man's voice seemed to vibrate through the lonely room, and, sitting in Father Peter's chair, with the light of Father Peter's lamp shining on his face and hand, Father Oliver's thoughts flowed on. It seemed to him that he had not sufficiently understood and appreciated Father Peter's kindliness, and he recalled his perfect good nature. "Death reveals many things to us," he said; and he lifted his head to listen, for the silence in the house and about the house reminded him of the silence of the dead, and he began to consider what his own span of life might be. He might live as long as Father Peter (Father Peter was fifty-five when he died); if so, twenty-one years of existence by the lake's side awaited him, and these years seemed to him empty like a desert—yes, and as sterile. "Twenty-one years wondering what became of her, and every evening like this evening—the same loneliness."

He sat watching the hands of his clock, and a peaceful meditation about a certain carnation that unfortunately burst its calyx was interrupted by a sudden thought. Whence the thought had come he could not tell, nor what had put it into his head, but it had occurred to him suddenly that "if Father Peter had lived a few weeks longer he would have found means of exchanging Rose Leicester for another schoolmistress, more suitable to the requirements of the parish. If Father Peter had lived he would have done her a grievous wrong. He wouldn't have allowed her to suffer, but he would have done her a wrong all the same." And it were better that a man should meet his death than he should do a wrong to another. But he wasn't contemplating his own death nor Rose's when this solution of the difficulty occurred to him. Our inherent hypocrisy is so great that it is difficult to know what one does think. He surely did not think it well that Father Peter had died, his friend, his benefactor, the man in whose house he was living? Of course not. Then it was strange he could not keep the thought out of his mind that Father Peter's death had saved the parish from a great scandal, for if Rose had been dismissed he might have found himself obliged to leave the parish.

Again he turned on himself and asked how such thoughts could come into his mind. True, the coming of a thought into the consciousness is often unexpected, but if the thought were not latent in the mind, it would not arise out of the mind; and if Father Peter knew the base thoughts he indulged in—yes, indulged in, for he

could not put them quite out of his mind—he very much feared that the gift of all this furniture might— No, he was judging Father Peter ill; Father Peter was incapable of a mean regret.

But who was he, he'd like to be told, that he should set himself up as Father Peter's judge? The evil he had foreseen had happened. If Father Peter felt that Rose Leicester was not the kind of schoolmistress the parish required, should he not send her away? The need of the parish, of the many, before the one. Moreover, Father Peter was under no obligation whatsoever to Rose Leicester. She had been sent down by the School Board subject to his approval. "But my case is quite different. I chose her; I decided that she was to remain." And he asked himself if his decision had come about gradually. No, he had never hesitated; he had dismissed Father Peter's prejudices as unworthy. . . . The church needed some good music. But had he thought of the church? Hardly at all. His first consideration had been his personal pleasure, and he had wished that the best choir in the diocese should be in his church. Rose Leicester had enabled him to gratify his vanity. He had made her his friend, he had taken pleasure in her smiles, and in the fact that he had only to express a desire for it to be fulfilled. After school, tired though she might be, she was always willing to meet him in the church for choir practice. She would herself propose to decorate the altar for feast days. How many times had they walked round the garden together gathering flowers for the altar! And it was strange that she could decorate

so well without knowing much about flowers or having much natural taste for flowers.

Feeling he was doing her an injustice, he admitted that she had made much progress, under his guidance, in her knowledge of flowers.

"But how did he treat her in the end, despite all her kindnesses? Shamefully, shamefully, shamefully!" and getting up from his chair he walked across the room, and when he turned he stopped, and drew his hand across his eyes. The clock struck twelve. "I shall be awake at dawn, and with all this story running in my head," and he paused at his bedroom door. But having suffered in thought, he was spared the realization, and that morning he lay awake, hardly annoyed at all by the blackbirds' whistling, contentedly going over the mistakes he had made—a little surprised, however, that the remembrance of them did not cause him more pain. At last he fell into profound sleep, and when his housekeeper knocked at his door and he heard her saying that it was past eight, he leaped out of bed cheerily, and sang a stave of song as he shaved himself. He gashed his chin, however, for he could not keep his attention fixed on his work, but must peep over the top of the glass, whence he could see his garden, and think how next year he would contrive a better arrangement of color. It was difficult to stop the bleeding, and he knew that Catherine would grumble at the state he left the towels in (he should not have used his bath towel); but these were minor matters. He was happier than he had been for many a day.

The sight of strawberries on his breakfast table

delighted him, and the man who had driven ten miles to see him yesterday called, and he shared his strawberries with him. They smoked a pipe together before they went out. Never had he felt in better spirits as they walked down the hillside; the sunlight was exciting, and the lake looked beautiful, and it was pleasant to stride along, talking of the bridge (at last there seemed some prospect of getting one). The intelligence of this new inspector filled him with hope, and he expatiated on the advantages of the bridge and many other things. Nor did his humor seem to depend entirely on the companionship of his visitor. It endured long after his visitor had left him, and very soon he began to think that his desire to go away for a long holiday was a passing indisposition of mind rather than a need. It pleased him to postpone his holiday to the end of the year, when he would have more leisure—to the month when the Government would give a formal promise to build the bridge.

His change of mind interested him, and he watched it and pondered it during his afternoon walks, till one day he looked round the empty country, and a sudden sense of his loneliness swept over him. He could not tell at first whether the pang he had just experienced was a recurrence of the old pain; he tried to persuade himself that it was but a vivid memory of it, but very soon he was driven to admit that the longing to go away had returned. That evening was not spent in writing letters about the affairs of the parish, but staring at the lamp, hearing Catherine finishing her last work in the kitchen; and he would get up from his chair and walk terror-

stricken about his room. That night he hardly slept at all. Lying between sleeping and waking, he thought of the long, bright, dusty day before him, and how it would pass away hour by hour. At the end of the afternoon he stood, a solitary figure, looking across the lake, heart-sick and wondering, feeling that nothing could save him but the spell of foreign travel; and his overwrought brain imagined a fair country, and himself as rambling, interested in the passers-by and the distant spire.

As he turned homeward a resolution strove to form itself in his heart. The strangest part of his disease was that he seemed unable to go, though he knew that to remain were to die. He seemed held back, and, unable to discover any natural reason for his hesitancy, he began to indulge in superstitious fears lest Rose's spirit haunted the lake, and that his punishment was to be kept a prisoner always.

One day, as he stood at the end of the sandy spit, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, he was startled by a footstep. He fancied it must be she, but it was only Christy, the boy who worked in his garden.

"Your reverence, the postman overlooked this letter in the morning. It was stuck at the bottom of the bag. He hopes the delay won't make any difference."

From Father O'Grady to Father Oliver Gogarty.

"June 1, 19—.

"DEAR FATHER GOGARTY:

"I am writing to ask you if you know anything about a young woman called Rose Leicester. She tells

me that she was schoolmistress in your parish and organist in your church, and that you thought very highly of her until one day a talebearer, Mrs. O'Mara by name, went to your house and told you that your schoolmistress was going to have a baby. It appears that at first you refused to believe her, and that you ran down to the school to ask Miss Leicester herself if the story you had heard about her was a true one. She admitted it, but on her refusal to tell you who was the father of the child you lost your temper; and the following Sunday you alluded to her so plainly, in your sermon about chastity, that there was nothing for her but to leave the parish.

"There is no reason why I should disbelieve Miss Leicester's story; I am an Irish priest like yourself, sir. I have worked in London among the poor for forty years, and Miss Leicester's story is, to my certain knowledge, not an uncommon one; it is, I am sorry to say, most probable; it is what would happen to any schoolmistress in Ireland in similar circumstances. The ordinary course is to find out the man and to force him to marry the girl; if this fails, to drive the woman out of the parish, it being better to sacrifice one affected sheep than that the whole flock should be contaminated. I am an old man; Miss Leicester tells me that you are a young man. I can therefore speak quite frankly. I believe the practice to which I have alluded is inhuman and unchristian, and has brought many an Irish girl to unspeakable misery and degradation. I have been able to rescue some, and, touched by their stories, I

have written frequently to the priest of the parish pointing out to him that his responsibility is not merely local, and does not end as soon as the woman has passed the boundary of his parish. I would ask you what you think your feelings would be if I were writing to you now to tell you that, after some months of degraded life, Miss Leicester had thrown herself from one of the bridges into the river? That might very well have been the story I had to write to you; fortunately for you, it is another story.

"Miss Leicester is a woman of strong character, and does not give way easily; her strength of will has enabled her to succeed where another woman might have failed. She is now living with one of my parishioners, a Mrs. Dent, of 24 Harold Street, who has taken a great liking to her, and helped her through her most trying time, when she had very little money and was alone and friendless in London. Mrs. Dent recommended her to some people in the country who would look after her child. She allowed her to pay her rent by giving lessons to her daughter on the piano. One thing led to another; the lady who lived on the drawing-room floor took lessons, and Miss Leicester is earning now, on an average, thirty shillings per week, which little income will be increased if I can appoint her to the post of organist in my church, my organist having been obliged to leave me on account of her health. It was while talking to Mrs. Dent on this very subject that I first heard Miss Leicester's name mentioned.

"Mrs. Dent was enthusiastic about her, but I could

see that she knew little about her lodger's antecedents, except that she came from Ireland. She was anxious that I should engage her at once, declaring that I could find no one like her, and she asked me to see her that evening. I went, and the young woman impressed me very favorably. She came to my church and played for me. I could see that she was an excellent musician, and there seemed to be no reason why I should not engage her at once. I should probably have done so without asking further questions—for I do not care to inquire too closely into a woman's past, once I am satisfied that she wishes to lead an honorable life—but Miss Leicester volunteered to tell me what her past had been, saying it was better I should hear it from her than from another. When she had told me her sad story, I reminded her of the anxiety that her disappearance from the parish would cause you. She shook her head, saying you did not care what happened to her. I assured her that such a thing was not the case, and begged of her to allow me to write to you; but I did not obtain her consent until she began to see that if she withheld it any longer we might think she was concealing some important fact. Moreover, I impressed upon her that it was right that I should hear your story, not because I disbelieved hers—I take it for granted the facts are correctly stated—but in the event of your being able to say something which would put a different complexion upon them.

"Yours very sincerely,

"FATHER O'GRADY, P.P."

IV

AFTER reading Father O'Grady's letter he looked round, fearing lest some one should speak to him. Christy was already some distance away; there was nobody else in sight; and feeling he was safe from interruption, he went toward the wood, thinking of the good priest who had saved her (in saving her Father O'Grady had saved him), and of the waste of despair into which he would certainly have drifted if the news had been that she had killed herself. The thought was an appalling one, and he stood looking into the green wood mysteriously, aware of the bird life in the branches. Suddenly he lay down and watched the insect life among the grass—that beetle pursuing its little destiny. But he was too exalted to remain lying down, and he wandered on, led by a bird's song to the edge of a dell. A phantom life seemed to emerge and beckon him, and he asked if the madness of the woods had overtaken him. . . . A ray of light fell through the branches and dissipated the shadow shape. Farther on he came upon a chorus of finches singing in some hawthorn trees, and in Derrinrush he stopped to listen to the silence that had suddenly fallen. A shadow floated by, and he looked up. The cause of the silence was a hawk passing overhead. Young birches and firs

were springing up in the clearance, and the priest shaded his eyes. . . . His feet sank in sand, he tripped over tufts of rough grass, and was glad to get out of this part of the wood into the shade of large trees.

Trees always interested him, and he began to think of their great roots seeking the darkness, and of their light branches lifting themselves in love toward the sky. But he and these trees were one, for there is but one life, one mother, one elemental substance out of which all has come. That was it, and his thoughts paused. Only in union is there happiness, and for many weary months he had been isolated, thrown out; but to-day he had been drafted suddenly into the general life, he had become again part of the general harmony, and that was why he was so happy. No better explanation was forthcoming, and he did not think that a better one was required—at least, not to-day.

He noticed with pleasure that he no longer tried to pass behind a thicket nor into one when he met poor woodgatherers bent under their heavy loads. He even stopped to speak to a woman out with her children; the three were breaking sticks across their knees, and he encouraged them to talk to him. But without his being aware of it, his thoughts hearkened back, and when it came to his turn to answer he could not answer. He had been thinking of Rose, and, ashamed of his absentmindedness, he left them tying up their bundles and went toward the shore, stopping many times to admire the pale arch of evening sky with never a wind in it, nor any sound but the cries of swallows in full pursuit. "An

immemorial evening," he said, and there was such a lightness in his feet that he believed, or very nearly, there were wings on his shoulders, which he only had to open to float away whither he might wish to go.

His brain overflowed with remembrances of her forgiveness, and at midnight he sat in his study still thinking, still immersed in his happiness, hearing moths flying about the burning lamp; one he rescued from a fiery death for sheer love of her. Later on the illusion of her presence grew so intense that he started up from his chair and looked round for her. Had he not felt her breath upon his cheek? Her very perfume had floated past! There . . . it had gone by again! No, it was not she—only the syringa breathing in the window.

From Father Oliver Gogarty to Father O'Grady.

"GARRANARD, BOHOLA,
"June 2, 19—.

"I stayed in the woods all day," he wrote, "for your letter brought me such happiness that I could not return home; and my thoughts are still full of the songs of birds and the scents of evening. I am the prey of a violent reaction, for Miss Leicester's disappearance caused me, as you rightly surmise, the gravest anxiety. Fear is a terrible thing. When her name was mentioned, my tongue seemed to thicken and I could not speak. I have seen her throwing herself into the river, I have seen her taken out, I have seen her about to take poison; and I can say this, that if I caused her a great deal of suffering, I have suffered myself at least as

much. But what I am thinking of now is of Miss Leicester's goodness in allowing you to write to me, in order that I might be spared further anxiety.

"I wish I could find words to thank you for what you have done; and I dare not think what might have happened if it hadn't been for you; what my despair might have been, and whither it might have led me. I am still under the influence of the emotion that your letter caused me, and can hardly collect my thoughts sufficiently to answer your questions as they should be answered. I can only say that Miss Leicester has told her story truthfully. As to your reproofs, I accept them, they are merited; and I thank you for your kind advice. I am glad that it comes from an Irishman, and I would give much to take you by the hand and to thank you again and again."

Getting up, he walked out of the room, feeling in a way that a calmer and more judicious letter would be preferable. But he must answer Father O'Grady, and at once; the letter would have to go. And in this resolve he walked out of his house into his garden, and stood there wondering at the flower life growing so peacefully, free from pain.

The tall Madonna lilies flourished like sculpture about the porch, and he admired their tall stems and leaves and carven blossoms, thinking how they would die without strife, without complaint. The sweetbriar filled the air with a sweet, applelike smell; and there was the lake shining in the moonlight, just as it had shone a thousand

years ago when the raiders returned to their fortresses pursued by enemies. He could just distinguish Castle Island, and he wondered what this lake reminded him of: it wound in and out of gray shores and headlands, fading into dim pearl-colored distance, and he compared it to a shroud, and then to a ghost, but neither comparison pleased him. It was like something, but the image he sought eluded him. At last he remembered how in a dream he had seen Rose drowned. She wore a white dress, and this lake seemed like her; there were her knees, and the white gown floating, filling the stream. "I am only thinking nonsense, but no matter. Yes, the lake reminds one of one's guilt. 'Every man has a lake in his heart.'" He had not sought the phrase, it had come suddenly into his mind. Yes, "every man has a lake in his heart." He sat like one stupefied in his chair, until his thoughts took fire again, and, feeling that he must write to Rose, he picked up the pen.

From Father Oliver Gogarty to Miss Rose Leicester.

"GARRANARD, BOHOLA,
"June 2, 19—.

"This letter will surprise you, but I must write to thank you for your kindness in asking Father O'Grady to send me a letter. It appears that you were afraid I might be anxious about you, and I have been very anxious. I have suffered a great deal since you left, and it is a great relief to my mind to hear that you are safe and well. I can understand how loath you were to allow Father O'Grady to write to me; he doesn't say

in his letter that you have forgiven me, but I hope that your permission to him to relieve my anxiety by a letter implies your forgiveness. Father O'Grady writes very kindly; it appears that everyone is kind except me. But I am thinking of myself again, of the ruin that it would have been if any of the terrible things that have happened to others had happened to you. But I cannot think of these things now; I am happy in thinking that you are safe."

The evening post had been lost, but if he were to walk to Bohola he would catch the morning mail, and his letter would be in her hands the day after to-morrow. It was just three miles to Bohola, and the walk there, he thought, would calm the extraordinary spiritual elation that news of Rose had kindled in his brain. The darkness of the night and the red, shapeless moon low down in the southern horizon suited his mood. Once he was startled by a faint sigh coming from a horse looking over a hedge, and the hedgerows were full of mysterious little cracklings. Something white ran across the road. "The white belly of a stoat," he thought; and he walked on, wondering what its quest might be.

The road led him through a heavy wood, and when he came out at the other end he stopped to gaze at the stars, for already a grayness seemed to have come into the night. The road dipped and turned, twisting through gray fields full of furze bushes, leading to a great hill, on the other side of which was Bohola. When he entered the village he wondered at the stillness

of its street. "The dawn is like white ashes," he said, as he dropped his letters into the box; and he was glad to get away from the shadowy houses into the country road. The daisies and the dandelions were still tightly shut, and in the hedgerow a half-awakened chaffinch hopped from twig to twig, too sleepy to chirrup. A streak of green appeared in the east, and the deathlike stillness was broken by cockcrows. He could hear them far away in the country and close by, and when he entered his village a little bantam walked up the road shrilling and clapping his wings, advancing to the fight. The priest admired his courage, and allowed him to peck at his knees. Close by Tom Mulhare's dorking was crowing hoarsely, "a hoarse bass," said the priest, and at the end of the village he heard a bird crowing an octave higher, and from the direction he guessed it must be Catherine Murphy's bird. Another cock, and then another. He listened, judging their voices to range over nearly three octaves.

The morning was so pure, the air so delicious, and its touch so exquisite on the cheek, that he could not bear even to think of a close bedroom and the heat of a feather bed. He went to walk in his garden, and as he passed up and down he appreciated the beauty of every flower; no flower seemed to him so beautiful as the anemones, and he thought of Rose Leicester living in a grimy London lodging; whereas he was here amid many flowers—anemones blue, scarlet, and purple, their heads bent down on their stalks. New ones were pushing up to replace the ones that had blown and scattered

the evening before. The gentians were not yet open, and he thought how they would look in a few hours—bluer than the midday sky. He passed through the wicket, and stood on the hilltop watching the mists sinking lower. The dawn light strengthened—the sky filled with pale tints of emerald, mauve, and rose. A cormorant opened his wings and flew down the lake, his fellows followed soon after; but Father Oliver stood on the hilltop waiting for daybreak. At last a red ball appeared behind a reddish cloud; its color changed to the color of flame, paled again, and at four flared up like a rose-colored balloon.

The day had begun, and he turned toward his house. But he couldn't sleep; the house was repellent, and he waited among the thorn bushes and ferns. Of what use to lie down in one's bed when one cannot sleep? His brain was clear as day, and he felt that he must away to woods and watersides.

Life is orientated like a temple; there are in every existence days when life streams down the nave, striking the forehead of the God, and during his long life Father Oliver remembered, and looked back with a little happy sadness upon, the morning when he invaded the pantry and cut large slices of bread, taking the butter out of the old red crock. He wrapped the slices in paper and went away to the woods to watch the birds and doze under the larches. And he was fortunate enough to catch sight of an otter asleep on a rock. Toward evening he came upon a wild duck's nest in the sedge; many of the ducklings had broken their shells; these struggled after

the duck; but there were two prisoners, two that could not escape from their shells, and, seeing their little lives would be lost if he did not come to their aid, he picked the shells away and took them to the water's edge, for he had heard Catherine say that one could almost see little ducks growing when they had had a drop of water. The old duck swam about uttering a whistling sound, her cry that her ducklings were to join her. And thinking of the lives he had saved, he felt a sudden regret that he had not come upon the nest earlier, when Christy brought him Father O'Grady's letter.

The yacht appeared between the islands, her sails filled with wind, and he began to dream how she might cast anchor outside the reeds. A sailor might draw a pinnace alongside, and he imagined a woman being helped into it and rowed to the landing place. But the yacht did not cast anchor; her helm was put up, her boom went over, and she went away on another tack. He was glad of his dream, though it endured only a moment, and when he looked up a great gull was watching him. The bird had floated so near that he could see the small round head and the black eyes; as soon as he stirred it wheeled and floated away. Many other little adventures happened before the day ended. A rabbit crawled by him screaming, for he could run no longer, and lay waiting for the weasel that appeared out of the furze. What was to be done? Save it and let the weasel go supperless? At eight the moon rose over Tinnick, and it was a great sight to see the yellow mass rising above the faint shores; and while he stood watch-

ing the moon an idea occurred to him that held him breathless. His sister had written to him some days ago asking if he could recommend a music mistress to her. It was through his sister that he might get Rose back to her country, and it was through his sister that he might make atonement for the wrong he had done. The letter must be carefully worded, for nuns understood so little, they were so estranged from the world. As for his sister Mary, she would not understand at all—she would oppose him; but Eliza was a practical woman, and he had confidence in her good sense.

He entered the house, and, waving Catherine aside, who reminded him that he had had nothing to eat since his dinner the day before, he went to his writing table and began his letter.

From Father Oliver Gogarty to the Mother Abbess, Tinnick Convent.

"GARRANARD, BOHOLA,
"June 3, 19—.

"MY DEAR ELIZA:

"I hope you will forgive me for having delayed so long to answer your letter, but I could not think at the moment of anyone whom I could recommend as music mistress, and I laid the letter aside, hoping that an idea would come to me. Well, an idea has come to me. I do not think you will find——"

The priest stopped, and after thinking awhile he laid down his pen and got up. The sentence he had been

about to write was, "I do not think you will find anyone better than Miss Leicester." But he would have to send Father O'Grady's letter to his sister, and even with Father O'Grady's letter, and all that he might add of an explanation, she would hardly be able to understand; and Eliza might show the letter to Mary, who was prejudiced. Father Oliver walked up and down the room thinking. . . . A personal interview would be better than the letter, for in a personal interview he would be able to answer his sister's objections; and instead of the long letter he had intended to write he wrote a short note, adding that he had not seen them for a long time, and would drive over to-morrow afternoon.

V

THE southern road was the shorter, but he wanted to see Moran and to hear when he proposed to begin to roof the abbey. Father Oliver thought, moreover, that he would like to see the abbey for a last time in its green mantle of centuries. The distance was much the same—a couple of miles shorter by the southern road, no doubt, but what are a couple of miles to an old roadster? Moreover, the horse would rest in Jimmy Maguire's stable while he and Moran rambled about the ruin. An hour's rest would compensate the horse for the two extra miles.

He tapped the glass; there was no danger of rain. For thirty days there had been no change—only a few showers, just enough to keep the country going; and he fell asleep thinking of the drive round the lake from Garranard to Tinnick in the sunlight and from Tinnick to Garranard in the moonlight.

He was out of bed an hour before his usual time, calling to Catherine for hot water. His shaving, always disagreeable, sometimes painful, was a joyous little labor on this day. Stropping his razor, he sang from sheer joy of living. Catherine had never seen him spring on the car with so light a step. And away went the old gray, pulling at the bridle, little thinking of the twenty-five Irish miles that lay before him.

The day was the same as yesterday, the meadows drying up for want of rain; and there was a thirsty chirruping of small birds in the hedgerows. Everywhere he saw rooks perched on the low walls that divided the fields, and they looked tired and hot. The farmers were complaining; but they were always complaining—everyone was complaining. He had complained of the dilatoriness of the Board of Works: for the first time in his life he sympathized a little with the board. If it had built the bridge he would not be enjoying this long drive; it would be built by and by; he couldn't feel as if he wished to be robbed of one half-hour of the long day in front of him; and he liked to think it would not end for him till nine o'clock.

"These summer days are endless," he said.

After passing the strait the lake widened out. On the side the priest was driving the shore was empty and barren. On the other side there were pleasant woods and interspaces and great ruins. Castle Carra, the principal ruin, appeared at the end of a headland, a great ivy-grown ruin showing among thorn bushes and ash trees. In bygone times the castle must have extended to the water's edge, for on every side fragments of arches and old walls were discovered hidden away in the thickets. Father Oliver knew the headland well and every part of the old fortress. He had climbed up the bare wall of the banqueting hall to where a breach revealed a secret staircase built between the walls, and had followed the staircase to a long straight passage, and down another staircase, in the hope of finding matchlock pistols. He

had wandered in the dungeons, and had listened to old stories of oubliettes. . . .

The moat which had cut the neck of land was now filled up; only the gateway remained, and it was sinking —the earth was claiming it. On the other side the land had been terraced, and there were the ruins of a great house, to which no doubt the descendants of the chieftain had retired on the decline of brigandage. And the kind of life that had been lived there was evidenced by the gigantic stone fox on a pillar in the middle of the courtyard, and the great hounds on either side of the gateway.

Castle Carra must have been the most considerable castle in the district of Tyrawley, and it was probably built by the Welsh who invaded Ireland in the thirteenth century, perhaps by William Barrett himself, who had certainly built the castle on the island opposite to Father Oliver's house.

William Fion (i. e., the Fair) Barrett had probably landed somewhere on the west coast, and come up through the great gaps between Slieve Cairn and Slieve Louan—it was not likely that he had landed on the east coast; he could hardly have marched his horde across Ireland—and Father Oliver imagined the Welshmen standing on the very hill on which his house now stood, and Fion telling his followers to build a castle on each island. Patsy Murphy, who knew more about the history of the country than anyone, thought that Castle Carra was of later date, but the ruins were the same. Over yonder was the famous causeway, and the gross

tragedy that had been enacted there he had heard from the woodcutter yesterday.

William's party of Welshmen were followed by other Welshmen—the Cusacks, the Petits, and the Brownes; and these in time fell out with the Barretts, and a great battle had been fought, the Battle of Moyne, in 1281, in which William Barrett had been killed. Notwithstanding their defeat, the Barretts had held the upper hand of the country for many a long year, and the priest began to smile, thinking of the odd story the old woodman had told him about the Barretts' steward, Sgnorach bhuid bhearrtha, "saving your reverence's presence," the old man had said; and, unable to translate the words into English fit for the priest's ears, he had said that they meant a glutton and a lewd fellow.

The Barretts had sent Sgnorach bhuid bhearrtha to collect rents from the Lynotts, another group of Welshmen, but the Lynotts killed him and threw his body into a well, called ever afterward Tobar na Sgornaighe (the Well of the Glutton), near the townland of Moygawnagh, Barony of Tyrawley. To avenge the murder of their steward, the Barretts assembled an armed force, and, having defeated the Lynotts and captured many of them, they offered their prisoners two forms of mutilation: they were either to be blinded or castrated. After taking counsel with their wise men, the Lynotts had chosen blindness; for blind men could have sons, and these would doubtless one day revenge the humiliation that was being passed upon them. A horrible story it was, for when their eyes had been thrust out with needles they were

led to a causeway, and those who crossed the stepping stones without stumbling were taken back to have the needles thrust into their eyes again; and the priest thought of the assembled horde laughing as the poor blind men fell into the water.

The story rambled on, the Lynotts plotting how they could be revenged on the Barretts, but the blinding of the Lynotts was the most interesting incident in it. How the Lynotts, in the course of generations, came into their vengeance he had half forgotten, and, instead of trying to remember the story, his eyes strayed over the landscape, and he admired the sunlight playing along the valley or lighting up a sudden scarp.

The road followed the shore of the lake, sometimes turning inland to avoid a hill or a bit of bog, but returning back again to the shore, finding its way through the fields, if they could be called fields—a little grass and some hazel bushes grew here and there between the rocks. Under a rocky headland, lying within embaying shores, he saw Church Island, the largest island in the lake, some seven or eight acres. Trees flourished there, and in the middle of the island were the ruins of the church from which the island took its name. Only an arch remained overgrown with bushes, but the paved path leading from the church to the hermit's cell could be followed. The hermit who had used this paved path fourteen hundred years ago was a poet; and Father Oliver had read how Marban had loved "the sheiling that no one knew save his God, the ash tree on the hither side, the hazel bush beyond it, its lintel of honeysuckle,

the wood shedding its mast upon fat swine." And he found it pleasanter to think of Ireland's hermits than of Ireland's savage chieftains, always at war, striving against each other along the shores of this lake, and from island to island.

His thoughts lingered in the seventh and eighth centuries, when Ireland had given herself to the wise guidance of the priests, and the arts were fostered in monasteries—the arts of gold work and illuminated missals. These were Ireland's halcyon days; a deep peace brooded, and under the guidance of the monks Ireland was the center of learning when all the rest of Europe was struggling in barbarism. There had been a renaissance in Ireland centuries before a gleam of light had appeared in Italy or in France. But in the middle of the eighth century the Danes arrived to pillage the country, and no sooner were they driven out than the English came to continue the work of devastation, and never since had it ceased. Father Oliver wondered if God were reserving the bright destiny for Ireland which He had withheld a thousand years ago, and he looked out for the abbey that Roderick, King of Connaught, had built in the twelfth century.

It stood on a knoll, and in the distance, almost hidden in bulrushes, was the last arm of the lake. "How admirable! how admirable!" he said, for Kilronan Abbey seemed to him strangely evocative of ancient Ireland that morning, and, touched by the beauty of the ruins, his doubts returned to him regarding the right of the present to lay hands on these great wrecks of Ireland's past.

He was no longer sure that he did not side with the archbishop, who was against the restoration—for entirely insufficient reasons, it was true. "Put a roof," Father Oliver said, "on the abbey, and it will look like any other church, and another link will be broken. 'Which is the better—a great memory or some trifling comfort?'" He continued to ponder this question till the car turned the corner and he caught sight of Father Moran, "out for his morning's walk," he said; and he compared Father Moran's walk up and down the high-road with his own rambles along the lake shores and through the pleasant woods of Carnecun.

For seven years Father Oliver had walked up and down that road; there was nowhere else for him to walk; and he remembered he had hated that road, but he did not think that he had suffered from the loneliness of the parish as much as Moran. He had been happier than Moran in Bridget Clery's cottage—a great idea had enabled him to forget every discomfort; we are never lonely as long as our idea is with us. But Moran was a plain man, without ideas, enthusiasms, or exaltations. Nor did he care for reading, or for a flower garden, only for drink. "Drink gives him dreams, and man must dream," he said.

Moran's drunkenness was Father Oliver's anxiety. He knew his curate was striving to cure himself, and he believed he was succeeding; but, all the same, it was terrible to think the temptation might overpower him at any moment, and that he might stagger helpless through the village—a very shocking example to everyone.

The people were prone enough in that direction, and for a priest to give scandal instead of setting a good example was about as bad as anything that could happen in the parish. But what was he to do? There was no hard-and-fast rule about anything, and Father Oliver felt that Moran must have his chance.

"I was beginning to think we were never going to see you again," and Father Moran held out a long, hard hand to Father Oliver. "You'll put up your horse? Christy, will you take his reverence's horse? You'll stay and have some dinner with me?"

"I can't stay more than half an hour. I'm on my way to Tinnick; I've business with my sister, and it will take me some time."

"You have plenty of time."

"No, I haven't. I ought to have taken the other road; I'm late as it is."

"But you will come into the house, if only for a few minutes."

Father Oliver had taught Bridget Clery cleanliness; at least, he had persuaded her to keep the fowls out of the kitchen, and he had put a paling in front of the house and made a little garden—an unassuming one, it is true, but a pleasant spot of color in the summer time—and he wondered how it was that Father Moran was not ashamed of its neglected state, nor of the widow's kitchen. These things were, after all, immaterial. What was important was that he should find no faintest trace of whisky in Moran's room; it was a great relief to him not to notice any; and no doubt that was why Moran had insisted on

bringing him into the house. The specifications were a pretext. He had to glance at them, however.

"No doubt if the abbey is to be roofed at all the best roof is the one you propose."

"Then you side with the archbishop?"

"Perhaps I do in a way, but for different reasons. I know very well, however, that the people won't kneel in the rain. Is it really true that he opposes the roofing of the abbey on account of the legend? I have heard the legend, but there are many variants. Let's go to the abbey and you'll tell the story on the way."

"You see, he'll only allow a portion of the abbey to be roofed."

"You don't mean that he is so senile and superstitious as that? Then the reason of his opposition really is that he believes his death to be implicit in the roofing of Kilronan."

"Unquestionably;" and the priests turned out of the main road.

"How beautiful it looks!" and Father Oliver stopped to admire.

The abbey stood on one of the lower slopes, on a knoll, overlooking rich water meadows, formerly abbatial lands.

"The legend says that the abbey shall be roofed when a De Stanton is abbot, and the McEvillys were originally De Stantons; they changed their name in the fifteenth century on account of a violation of sanctuary committed by them. A roof shall be put on those walls, the legend says, when a De Stanton is again abbot of Kilronan, and the abbot shall be slain on the highroad."

"And to save himself from a violent death, he will only allow you to roof a portion of the abbey. Now, what reason does he give for such an extraordinary decision?"

"Are bishops ever expected to have reasons?"

The priests laughed, and Father Oliver said: "We might appeal to Rome."

"A lot of good that would do us. Haven't we all heard the archbishop say that any of his priests who appeals to Rome against him will get the worst of it?"

"I wonder that he dares to defy popular opinion in this way."

"What popular opinion is there to defy? Wasn't Patsy Donovan saying to me only yesterday that the archbishop was a brave man to be letting any roof at all on the abbey? And Patsy is the best-educated man in this part of the country."

"People will believe anything."

"Yes, indeed."

And the priests stopped at the grave of Seaghan na Soggarth, or "John of the Priests," and Father Oliver told Father Moran how a young priest, who had lost his way in the mountains, had fallen in with Seaghan na Soggarth. Seaghan offered to put him into the right road, but instead of doing so he led him to his house, and closed the door on him, and left him there tied hand and foot. Seaghan's sister, who still clung to religion, loosed the priest, and he fled, passing Seaghan, who was on his way to fetch the soldiers. Seaghan followed after, and on they went like hare and hound till they got to the abbey. There the priest, who could run no farther,

turned on his foe, and they fought until the priest got hold of Seaghan's knife and killed him with it.

"But you know the story. Why am I telling it to you?"

"I only know that the priest killed Seaghan. Is there any more of it?"

"Yes, there is more."

And Father Oliver went on to tell it, though he did not feel that Father Moran would be interested in the legend; he would not believe that it had been prophesied that an ash tree should grow out of the buried head, and that one of the branches should take root and pierce Seaghan's heart. And he was right in suspecting his curate's lack of sympathy. Father Moran at once objected that the ash tree had not yet sent down a branch to pierce the priest-killer's heart.

"Not yet; but this branch nearly touches the ground, and there's no saying that it won't take root in a few years."

"But his heart is there no longer."

"Well, no," said Father Oliver, "it isn't; but if one is to argue that way, no one would listen to a story at all."

Father Moran held his peace for a little while, and then he began talking about the penal times, telling how religion in Ireland was another form of love of country, and that, if Catholics were intolerant to every form of heresy, it was because they instinctively felt that the questioning of any dogma would mean some slight subsidence from the idea of nationality that held the people

together. Like the ancient Jews, the Irish believed that the faith of their forefathers could bring them into their ultimate inheritance; this was why a proselytizer was hated so intensely.

"More opinions," Father Oliver said to himself. "I wonder he can't admire that ash tree, and be interested in the story, which is quaint and interesting, without trying to draw a historical parallel between the Irish and the Jews. Anyhow, thinking is better than drinking," and he jumped on his car. The last thing he heard was Moran's voice saying, "He who betrays his religion betrays his country."

"Confound the fellow, bothering me with his preaching on this fine summer's day! Much better if he did what he was told, and made up his mind to put the small green slates on the abbey, and not those coarse blue things which will make the abbey look like a common barn."

Then, shading his eyes with his hand, he peered through the sun haze, following the shapes of the fields. The corn was six inches high, and the potatoes were coming into blossom. True, there had been a scarcity of water, but they had had a good summer, thanks be to God, and he thought he had never seen the country looking so beautiful. And he loved this country, this poor Western plain with shapely mountains inclosing the horizon. Ponies were feeding between the whins, and they raised their shaggy heads to watch the car passing. In the distance cattle were grazing, whisking the flies away. How beautiful was everything—the white clouds hanging

in the blue sky, and the trees!—there were some trees, but not many—only a few pines. He caught glimpses of the lake through the stems; and tears rose to his eyes, so intense was his happiness, and he attributed his happiness to his native land and to the thought that he was living in it. Only a few days ago he had wished to leave it—no, not forever, but for a time; and as his old car jogged through the ruts he wondered how it was that he had ever wished to leave Ireland, even for a single minute.

"Now, Christy, which do you reckon to be the shorter road?"

"The shorter road, your reverence, is the Joycetown road, but I doubt if we can get the car through it."

"How is that?"

And the boy answered that since the Big House had been burnt the road hadn't been kept in repair.

"But," said Father Oliver, "the Big House was burnt seventy years ago."

"Well, your reverence, you see, it was a good road then, but the last time I heard of a car going that way was last February."

"And if a car got through in February, why can't we get through on the first of June?"

"Well, your reverence, there was the storm, and I do be hearing that the trees that fell across the road then haven't been removed yet."

"I think we might try the road, for all that, for though if we have to walk the greater part of it, there will be a saving in the end."

"That's true, your reverence, if we can get the car

through; but if we can't we may have to come all the way back again."

"Well, Christy, we'll have to risk that. Now, will you be turning the horse up the road? And I'll stop at the Big House—I've never been inside it. I'd like to see what it is like."

Joycetown House was the last link between the present time and the past. In the beginning of the century a duellist had lived there; the terror of the countryside he had become, for he had never been known to miss his man. For the slightest offense, real or imaginary, he sent seconds demanding redress. No more than his ancestors, who had doubtless lived on the islands, in Castle Island and Castle Hag, could he live without fighting. But when he had completed his round dozen, a priest had said, "If we don't put a stop to his fighting, there won't be a gentleman left in the country," and had written to him to that effect.

The story runs how Joyce, knowing the feeling of the country was against him, had tried to keep the peace. But the blood fever came on him again, and he had called out his nearest neighbor, Browne of the Neale, the only friend he had in the world. Browne lived at Neale House, just over the border, in County Galway, so the gentlemen arranged to fight in a certain field near the mearing. It was Browne of Neale who was the first to arrive. Joyce, having to come a dozen miles, was a few minutes late. As soon as his gig was seen, the people, who had been in hiding, came out, and didn't they put themselves between him and Browne! They were all

armed with pitchforks, and didn't they tell him up to his face there was to be no fighting that day! And the priest, who was at the head of them, said the same; but Joyce, who knew his countrymen, paid no heed, but stood up in the gig, and, looking round him, said, "Now, boys, which is it to be? The Mayo cock or the Galway cock?" In spite of all the priest could say, didn't they all begin to cheer him, and they carried him into the field in which he shot Browne of the Neale. . . .

"A queer people, the queerest in the world," Father Oliver thought, as he pulled a thorn bush out of the doorway and stood looking round. There were some rough chimney pieces high up in the grass-grown walls, but beyond these really nothing to be seen, and he wandered out seeking traces of terraces along the hillside.

On meeting a countryman out with his dogs he tried to inquire about the state of the road.

"I wouldn't be saying, your reverence, that you mightn't get the car through by keeping close to the wall; but Christy mustn't let the horse out of a walk."

The countryman said he would go a piece of the road with them, and tell Christy the spots he'd have to look out for.

"But your work?"

"There's no work doing now to speak of, your reverence."

The three of them together just managed to remove a fallen tree. This seemed the most serious obstacle, and the countryman said once they were over the top of the

hill they would be all right; the road wasn't so bad after that.

Half a mile farther on Father Oliver found himself in sight of the main road, and of the cottage that his sister Mary had lived in before she joined Eliza in the convent.

To have persuaded Mary to take this step proved Eliza's superiority more completely than anything else she had done, so Father Oliver had said. He had always felt that it was impossible to say what mightn't have happened to poor Mary if she had remained in the world. Her life up to the time she entered the convent had been nothing but a series of failures. She had been a shop assistant, but standing behind the counter gave her varicose veins, and she had gone to a situation in Dublin as nursery governess. Father Oliver had heard of musical studies: she used to play the guitar. But the scope of the instrument was limited; she had given it up, and returned to Tinnick with the intention of starting a rabbit and poultry farm. Who had put this idea into her head it was impossible to say. When he received Eliza's letter telling him of this last experiment, he had thrown up his hands. Of course, it could only end in failure, in a great loss of money; and when he read that she was going to take the pretty cottage on the road to Tinnick, he had become suddenly sad.

"Why should she have selected that cottage, the only pretty one in the county? Wouldn't any other do just as well for her foolish experiment?"

VI

THE flowered cottage on the road to Tinnick stood in the midst of trees, on a knoll some few feet above the roadway, and Father Oliver, when he was a boy, used to walk out by himself from Tinnick to see the hollyhocks and the sunflowers; they overtopped the palings, the sunflowers looking like saucy country girls and the hollyhocks like grand ladies, delicate and refined, in pink muslin dresses. He used to stand by the gate looking into the garden, delighted by its luxuriance. There were clumps of sweet pea and beds of red carnations and roses everywhere, and he always remembered the violets and pansies he had seen the last time he looked into the garden. It was just before he went away to Maynooth. He never remembered seeing the garden in bloom again. He was seven years at Maynooth, and when he came home for his vacations it was too late or too early in the season, or he had never happened to pass that way. He was interested in other things, and had forgotten the garden. During his curacy at Kilronan he rarely went to Tinnick, and when he did he took the other road, so that he might see Father Peter.

It was practically certain that the last time he saw the garden in bloom was just before he went to Maynooth.

However this might be, it was certain he would never see it in bloom again. Mary had left the cottage and the garden a ruin and a waste. It was sad to think of the clean thick thatch and the whitewashed walls covered with creeper and China roses, for now the thatch was black and moldy, and the roof was sagging. The doors were broken, and barely held together; and the garden was a still more disgraceful sight. Only a few stocks survived; the rose trees were all gone—the rabbits had eaten them, and they had barked the fruit trees. There was nothing but weeds; they overtopped the currant and gooseberry bushes; here and there was a trace of box edging. "In a few more years," he said, "the roof will fall in, and the garden will become part of the waste."

Then his eyes roved over the waste country into which he was going—a meager black soil, with here and there a thorn bush and a peasant's cabin. And this waste country reached very nearly to the town of Tinnick. Father Oliver knew every potato field and the shape of every distant wood; this road reminded him perhaps more intimately than anything of his early life—of the dream behind him. He watched the shape of the fields, knowing quite well the exact moment when meadows would appear. . . . And there they were! He could see them through the elms, the sun shining on them just as of yore, and the cattle grazing there. The town pavement ended at these elms, and he remembered how he used to look on this pavement as a sign where the life of the town began. Beyond this pavement was the loneliness of

the country. He had not been this way for a long while, and in his present mood of mind he looked forward to every well-remembered aspect—to the high wall on the left hand. That wall used to be one of his childish admirations. Only when a tree fell and gapped it had he been able to get a glimpse of what lay beyond; and he remembered how he used to climb up these gaps, and stand on tiptoe watching the sunlight and the shadows streaming over the deep meadow grass. Peace and beauty brooded there; and when the moon rose up through the branches, and hung round and yellow on a gray dusky sky, the park seemed more than ever wonderful.

A great nobleman lived there occasionally; he came there every two years for the summer months, bringing friends with him. The whole town was supposed to hate this man, for he cared nothing for Ireland, and was said to be a man of loose living; he was credited with loving his friend's wife, and she used to come there sometimes with her husband, sometimes without him, and he remembered seeing her driving past. "The sight of old places quickens memory," he said. This woman was dead, so was the lord who loved her. No one spoke of them now; Father Oliver had not given them a thought these many years; he might never think of her again. Therefore he wondered what could have put thoughts of this dead woman into his mind. Was it the sight of the ugly cottages about the market place, without cleanliness and without light? She had done nothing to alleviate the lives of these poor folk, and it might

have been those cottages that had put thoughts of her into his mind. Or the cause might have been that he was going to offer Rose Leicester to his sister as music mistress. But what connection between Rose Leicester and this dead woman? Well, he was going to propose Rose Leicester to Eliza, and the best line of argument would be that Rose would cost less than anyone as highly qualified as she. Nuns were always anxious to get things cheap, but he must not let them get Rose too cheap. But the question of price wouldn't arise between him and Eliza. Eliza would see the wrong he had done to Rose was preying on his conscience, and that he'd never be happy until he had made atonement—that was the light in which she would view the matter, so it would be better to let things take their natural course and to avoid making plans. The more he thought of what he should say to Eliza, the less likely was he to speak effectively; and feeling that he had better rely on the inspiration of the moment, he sought distraction from his errand by noting the beauty of the hillside. He had always liked the way the road dipped and then ascended steeply to the principal street in the town. There were some pretty houses in the dip—houses with narrow doorways and long windows, built, no doubt, in the beginning of the nineteenth century—and his ambition had once been to live in one of these houses.

The bridge was an eighteenth-century bridge, with a foaming weir on the left, and on the right there was a sentimental walk under linden trees, and the ruined mills showing against the sunset. There were generally

some boys seated on the parapet, and their fishing rods were picturesque in the lingering light.

Never had the gray mills seemed more melancholy, more bygone, and he would have stopped the car, so remote did they seem—so like things of long ago that time had mercifully weaned from the stress and struggle of life.

At the corner of the main street was the house in which he had been born. The business had passed into other hands, but the old name—"Gogarty's Drapery Stores"—remained. Across the way were the butcher and the grocer, and a little higher up the inn at which the commercial travelers lodged; he remembered how their numerous leather trunks used to interest him, and for a moment he stood a child again, seeing them drive away on post cars. There were a few more shops—very few—and then the town dwindled very quickly; slated roofs gave way to thatched cottages, and of the same miserable kind that used to provoke his antipathy when he was a boy.

This sinful dislike of poverty he had overcome in early manhood. A high religious enthusiasm had enabled him to overcome it, but his instinctive dislike of the lowly life—intellectual lowliness as well as physical—gathered within these cottages, seemed to have returned again. And perforce he asked himself if he were wanting in natural compassion, if all that he had of goodness in him were a debt he owed to the Church. Maybe it was in patience rather than in compassion that he was lacking; and pursuing this idea, he remembered the hopes he en-

tertained when he railed off a strip of ground in front of Bridget Clery's house. They were that his example might inspire others. Eliza was perhaps more patient, and he began to wonder if she had any definite aim in view, and if the spectacle of the convent, with its show of nuns walking under the trees in the afternoon, would eventually awaken some desire of refinement in the people, if the money their farms now yielded would produce some sort of improvement in their cottages, the removal of those dreadfully heavy smells, and a longing for color that would find expression in the planting of flowers.

They gave their money willingly enough for the adornment of their chapel, for stained glass, incense, candles, and for music, and were it not for the services of the Church he didn't know into what barbarism the people mightn't have fallen: the tones of the organ sustaining clear voices of nuns singing a Mass by Mozart must sooner or later inspire belief in the friendliness of pure air and the beauty of flowers. Flowers, after all, are the only beautiful things within the reach of these poor people. Roses are happily within the reach of all. There is nothing more entirely natural or charming in the life of man than his love of flowers: it preceded his love of music; no doubt an appreciation of something better in the way of art than a jig played on the pipes would follow close on the purification of the home.

Rose Leicester was herself beautiful, her personality was winning and charming; her playing—above all, her singing—might have inspired the people, but she was

going to the convent. The convent had got her. It was a pity—and he remembered how angry Mrs. O'Mara's news, fabrications, had made him—that Eliza had said she could give Rose more than she was earning in Garranard to come to the convent to teach music. He didn't believe Eliza had ever said such a thing. It mattered very little. Anyhow, he begrudged the convent Rose. Eliza was going to get her, and cheaply. All he could do would be to make the best terms he could.

But he could not constrain his thoughts to the present moment. They would go back to the fateful afternoon when he ran across the fields to ask Rose if what Mrs. O'Mara had said of her were true. If he had only waited! If she had come to him to confession on Saturday, as he expected she would! If something had prevented him from preaching on Sunday! A bad cold might have prevented him from speaking, and she might have gone away for a while, and, when her baby was born, she might have come back. It could have been easily arranged. But Fate had ordered her life otherwise, and here he was in the convent, hoping to make her some poor amends for the wrong he had done her. Would Eliza help him?—that was the question, and he crossed the beeswaxed floor and stood looking at the late afternoon sunlight glancing through the trees, falling across the greensward.

"How do you do, Oliver?"

His face lighted up, but it changed expression and became gray again. He had expected to see Eliza, tall and thin, with yellow eyebrows and pale eyes. Hers was

a good, clearly cut face, like his own, where as Mary's was quite different. Yet a family likeness stared through a face heavy and white. Her eyes were smaller than his, and she already began to raise them and lower them, and to look at him askance, in just the way he hated. Somehow or other she always contrived to make him feel uncomfortable, and the present occasion was no exception. She was already reproving him, hoping he was not disappointed at seeing her, and he had to explain that he had expected to see Eliza, and that was why he had looked surprised. She must not confuse surprise with disappointment. He was very glad to see her.

"I know I am not as interesting as Eliza," she began, "but I thought you might like to see me, and if I hadn't come at once I shouldn't have had an opportunity of seeing you alone."

"She has something to confide," Father Oliver said to himself, and he hoped that her confidences might be cut short by the timely arrival of Eliza.

"Eliza is engaged at present. She told Sister Agatha to tell you that she would be with you presently. I met Sister Agatha in the passage, and I said I would take the message myself. I suppose I oughtn't to have done so, but if I hadn't I shouldn't have had an opportunity of speaking with you."

"Why is that?"

"I don't think she likes me to see you alone."

"My dear Mary!"

"You don't know, Oliver, what it is to live in a convent, and your own sister the head of it."

"I should have thought, Mary, that it was especially pleasant, and that you were especially fortunate. And as for thinking that Eliza is not wishing you to see me alone, I am sure——"

"You are sure I'm mistaken."

"What reason could she have?"

"Eliza doesn't wish the affairs of the convent discussed. You know, I suppose, that the building of the new wing has put a burden of debt on the convent."

"I know that; so why should Eliza——"

"Eliza tries to prevent my seeing any of the visitors. Now, do you think that quite right and fair toward one's sister?"

Father Oliver tried to prevent himself from smiling, but he sympathized so entirely with Eliza's efforts to prevent Mary from discussing the affairs of the convent that he could hardly keep down the smile that rose to his lips. He could see Eliza's annoyance on coming into the parlor and finding Mary detailing all the gossip and confiding her own special woes, for the most part imaginary, to a visitor. Nor would Mary refrain from touching on the reverend mother's shortcomings. He was so much amused that he might have smiled if he had not suddenly remembered that Mary might leave the convent and insist on coming to live with him; and the idea so frightened him that he began to think of what he could say to pacify her. In the midst of his confusion and embarrassment he remembered suddenly that Mary had been professed last year, and therefore could not leave the convent, and this knowledge filled him with

such joy that he could not keep back the words, but must remind Mary that she had had ample opportunity of considering if she were suited to the religious life.

"You see, Mary, you should have thought of all this before you were professed."

"I shan't take my final vows till next year."

"But, my dear Mary, once a woman has taken the black veil . . . it is the same thing, you know."

"Not quite, otherwise there would be no meaning in the delay."

"You don't mean to say that you're thinking of leaving the convent, Mary?"

"Not exactly, but it is very hard on me, Oliver. I was thinking of writing to you, but I hoped that you would come to see us. You have been a long time now without coming."

"Well, Mary——"

"Eliza loves ruling everybody, and just because I am her sister she is harder on me than anyone else. Only the other day she was furious with me because I stopped at confession a few minutes longer than usual. 'I think,' she said, 'you might spare Father Higgins your silly scruples.' Now, how is one to stop in a convent if one's own sister interferes in one's confessions?"

"Well, Mary, what are you thinking of doing?"

"There are some French nuns who have just come over and want to open a school, and are looking for Irish subjects. I was thinking they'd like to have me. You see, I wouldn't have to go through the novitiate again, for they want an experienced person to teach them

English and to mind the school for them. It is really a mistake to be under one's own sister."

At that moment the door opened and Eliza came in, apologizing for having kept her brother so long waiting.

"You see, my dear Oliver, I've had two mothers here this morning, and you know what parents are. I suppose Mary has told you about our difficulties. Now, do you mean to say that you have found a person who will suit us? . . . It is really very kind of you."

"I can't say for certain, Eliza. Of course, it is difficult for me to know exactly what you want; but, so far as I know, I think the person I have in my mind will suit you."

"But has she a diploma from the academy? We must have a certificate."

"I think she'll suit you, but we'll talk about her presently. Don't you think we might go into the garden?"

"Yes, it will be pleasanter in the garden. And you, Mary—you've had your little chat with Oliver."

"I was just going, Eliza. If I'd known that Oliver wanted to speak privately to you, I'd have gone sooner."

"No, no, I assure you, Mary."

Mary held out her hand to her brother, saying:

"I suppose I shall not see you again, unless, perhaps, you're stopping the night with Father Higgins. It would be nice if you could do that. You could say Mass for us in the morning."

Father Oliver shook his head.

"I'm afraid I must get back to-night."

"Well, then, good-by." And Mary went out of the room regretfully, like one who knows that the moment her back is turned all her faults will become the subject for conversation.

"I hear from Mary that some French nuns are coming over, and want to open a school. I hope that won't interfere with yours, Eliza; you spent a great deal of money upon the new wing."

"It will interfere very much indeed; but I'm trying to get some of the nuns to come here, and I hope the bishop will not permit a new foundation. It's very hard upon us Irish women if we are to be eaten out of house and home by pious foreigners. I'm in correspondence with the bishop about it. As for Mary——"

"You surely don't think she's going to leave?"

"No, I don't suppose she'll leave; it would be easier for me if she did, but it would give rise to any amount of talk. And where would she go if she did leave, unless she lived with you?"

"My house is too small; besides, she didn't speak of leaving, only that she hadn't yet taken her final vows. I explained that no one will distinguish between the black veil and final vows. Am I not right?"

"I think those vows will take a great weight off your mind, Oliver. I wish I could say as much for myself."

The reverend mother opened a glass door, and brother and sister stood for some time admiring the flower vases that lined the terrace.

"I can't get her to water the geraniums."

"If you'll tell me where I can get a can——"

"You'll excuse me, reverend mother."

It was the sister in charge of the laundry, and, seeing her crippled arm, Father Oliver remembered how her dress had become entangled in the machinery. He didn't know, however, that the fault lay with Mary, who had been told off to watch the machinery and to stop it instantly in case of necessity.

"She can't keep her attention fixed on anything, not even on her prayers, and what she calls piety I should call idleness. It's terrible to have to do with stupid women, and the convent is so full of them that I often wonder what is the good of having a convent at all."

"But, Eliza, you don't regret——"

"No, of course I don't regret. I should do just the same again. But don't let us waste our time talking about vocations. I hear enough of that here. I want you to tell me about the music mistress; that's what interests me."

And when Father Oliver had told her the whole story and showed her Father O'Grady's letter, she said:

"You know I always thought you were a little hard on Miss Leicester. Father O'Grady's letter convinces me that you were."

"My dear Eliza, I don't want advice; I've suffered enough."

"Oliver dear, forgive me." And the nun put out her hand to detain him.

"Well, don't say again, Eliza, that you always thought. It's irritating, and it does no good."

"Her story is known, but she could live in the convent; that would shelter her from any sort of criticism. . . . I don't see why she shouldn't take the habit of one of the postulants, but——"

The priest waited for his sister to speak, and after waiting a little while he asked her what she was going to say.

"I was going to ask you," said the nun, waking from her reverie, "if you had written to Miss Leicester."

"Yes, I wrote to her."

"And she's willing to come back?"

"I haven't spoken to her about that. It didn't occur to me until afterward; but I can write at once if you consent."

"I may be wrong, Oliver, but I don't think she'll care to leave London and come back here, where she is known."

"But, Eliza, a girl likes to live in her own country. Mind you, I am responsible. I drove her out of her country among strangers. She's living among Protestants."

"I don't think that will trouble her very much."

"I don't know why you say that, Eliza. Do you think that a woman cannot repent? that because she happens to have sinned once——"

"No; I suppose there are repentant sinners, but I think we generally go on as we begin. Now, you see, Father O'Grady says that she's getting on very well in London. She seems to be appreciated there, and we like to live among those who appreciate us."

"Well, Eliza, of course, if you start with the theory that no one can repent——"

"I didn't say that, Oliver. But she wouldn't tell you who the man was. She seems a person of character—I mean, she doesn't seem to be lacking in strength of character."

"She's certainly a most excellent musician. You'll find no one like her, and you may be able to get her very cheap. And if your school doesn't pay——"

A shade passed across the reverend mother's face.

"There's no doubt that the new wing has cost us a great deal of money."

"Then there are the French nuns——"

"My dear Oliver, if you wish me to engage Miss Leicester as music mistress I'll do so. There's no use speaking to me about the French nuns. I'll engage her because you ask me, but I cannot pay as much as women generally ask who have diplomas. How much do you think she'd come for?"

"I don't know what she's earning in London, but I suppose you can pay her an average wage. You could pay her according to results."

"What you say is quite true, Oliver." And the priest and the nun continued their walk up and down in front of the unfinished building. "But you don't know, Oliver, if she's willing to leave London. You'll have to write and find out."

"Very well, Eliza, I'll write. You'll be able to offer her as much as she was earning in my parish as schoolmistress. That's fifty pounds a year."

"It's more than we can afford, Oliver, but if you wish it——"

"I do wish it, Eliza. Thank you. You've taken a great weight off my mind."

They passed into the house, and, stopping in front of the writing table, the nun looked to see if there were paper and envelopes in the blotter.

"You'll find everything you want, even sealing wax," she said. "Now I'll leave you."

From Father Oliver Gogarty to Miss Rose Leicester.

"Tinnick Convent,
"June 4, 19—.

"Dear Miss Leicester:

"I take it for granted that you received the letter I sent you two days ago, telling you how much I appreciated your kindness in asking Father O'Grady to write to tell me that you were quite safe and getting on well. Since writing that letter I feel more keenly than ever that I owe you reparation, for it was through an error of judgment on my part that you are now an exile from your own country. Everyone is agreed that I have committed an error of judgment. My sister, the superioress of this convent from where I am writing, is of that opinion. The moment I mentioned your name she began, 'I always thought that—' and I begged of her to spare me advice on the subject, saying that I knew as well as she could tell me that I had made a mistake. . . . I asked her if she would help me to make atonement.

"The new wing is nearly completed, and they expect

the best Catholic families in Ireland to send their daughters to be educated here. I had heard that my sister's difficulty was to obtain sufficient musical instruction, and I at once thought of you. I thought that you might like to live in your own country. Now that your thoughts have again turned toward God, it must be painful for you to live amid strangers in a Protestant country. My sister is of the same opinion, and she tells me that if you wish to come over here, and if Father O'Grady advises it, she will take you as music mistress. You will live in the convent. You can enter it, if you wish, as a postulant, or if you should remain an extern teacher the salary they will give you will be fifty pounds a year. I know you can make more than that in London, but you can live more cheaply here, and you will be among friends and will be living in a Catholic country.

"I shall be glad to hear from you on this subject.

"Very sincerely yours,

"OLIVER GOGARTY, P.P."

When he looked up, the darkness under the trees surprised him, and the geraniums so faintly red on the terrace, and his sister passing up and down like a phantom.

"Eliza."

He heard her beads drop, and out of a loose sleeve a slim hand took the letter. There was not enough light in the room to read by, and she remained outside, leaning against the glass door.

"You haven't written exactly the letter I should have

written, but, then, we're quite different. I should have written a cold and more businesslike letter." His face changed expression, and she added: "I'm sorry if I'm unsympathetic, Oliver."

The touch of her hand and the look in her eyes surprised him; for Eliza was not demonstrative, and he wondered what had called forth this sudden betrayal of feeling. He expected her to ask him not to send the letter, but instead of doing so she said:

"If the letter were written otherwise it wouldn't be like yourself, Oliver. Send it, and if she leaves London and comes back here I will think better of her. It will be proof that she has repented. I see you'll not have an easy mind until you make atonement. . . . You exaggerate, I think, but everyone for himself in a matter like this."

"Thank you, Eliza. You always understand."

"Not always. I failed to understand when you wanted to set up a hermitage on Castle Island."

"Yes, you did; you have better sense than I. Yet I feel we are more alike than the others. You have counted for a great deal in my life, Eliza. Do you remember saying that you intended to be reverend mother? And now you are reverend mother."

"I don't think I said 'I intended.' But I felt that if I became a nun, one day or another I should be reverend mother; one generally knows what is going to happen—one's own fate, I mean."

"I wonder if Mary knows?"

"If she does, I wish she'd tell us."

"We'll have time to walk round the garden once

more. You have no idea what a pleasure it is for me to see you—to talk with you like this."

And, talking of Mary, they walked slowly, forgetful of everything but each other.

A bell rang.

"I must be going; it will be late before I get home."

"Which way are you going? Round by Kilronan or across the Bridge of Keel?"

"I came by Kilronan. I think I'll take the other way. There will be a moon to-night."

Brother and sister entered the convent.

"You'll enjoy the drive?"

"Yes." And he fell to thinking of the drive home by the southern road, the mountains unfolding their many aspects in the gray moonlight, and melting away in misty perspectives.

VII

From Miss Leicester to Father Oliver Gogarty.

"4 Wilson Street, Dorset Square, London.

"Dear Father Gogarty:

I WENT to see Father O'Grady yesterday, and he showed me your letter. As I sat reading it I heard him say: 'Evidently a highly nervous, sensitive man, quite unlike the ordinary Irish priest.' I told him that he would have to know you to appreciate how different you were from the stout, well-fed priest one sees walking up and down the railway stations in Ireland, looking round to see if anyone is admiring him. We talked about you, and about the wrong you had done me, a long time. I confess I am rather tired of hearing my wrongs discussed, and it is tedious to have a view which is not entirely mine impressed upon me; but dear Father O'Grady sees things so entirely from his own point of view, and he would not understand if I were to tell him—I wonder if you will—that the wrong that was done me (the horrid word comes up again) was more sentimental than material. My plans for leaving Garranard were already made, and your allusion to me in your sermon only precipitated matters, causing me at most some temporary inconvenience.

"Your imagination of the difficulties I met with in London does not seem to get further than the fact that I had very little money, and that I left Garranard disgraced. I had enough money—not a great deal, but enough to carry me through; and as for the disgrace, I am afraid the good or evil opinion of Garranard doesn't trouble me much. I shall never see Garranard again; not one of those who heard you speak against me shall I ever see; they will have no opportunity of slighting me, and if they had, their slights would matter very little. The fish under the wave doesn't think much of the eagle in the sky, and in Garranard I was the eagle or the fish—whichever you like. I loved its kind, sweet, docile animal life, and would not have been willingly without it, but you were the only human being with whom I could communicate, and we only communicated through the music. So far as ideas are concerned, you and I stood at the opposite ends of the earth; but ideas are here to-day and gone to-morrow, whereas our feelings are always with us, and we recognize those who feel like us, and at once, by a sort of instinct. Don't you remember the day I met you on the road, and how we jumped off our bicycles and stood talking to each other, each wondering what the other was going to say? Didn't you say something about Mozart's Mass, and didn't I know at once I had met a companion spirit? And will you believe me when I tell you that I had decided to leave Garranard that morning, and it was our talk about music on the roadside that decided me to remain—at all events, it delayed my departure. Father Peter died a few days afterward, you

were appointed to the parish, and I couldn't imagine you living in Garranard without music, without companionship except what distraction you could find in a chat with a parishioner, and without a friend except Father Moran, and he could never be a friend of yours in any real sense of the word. All the time I was in Garranard I never forgot I could go when I liked, whereas yours was a life's job. I stayed on for your sake, and might have stayed a little longer, though London was drawing me all the while, if you hadn't denounced me. You got rid of me; but will you ever get a schoolmistress again who can play the harmonium as well as I, who can teach the choir as well as I, who can decorate the altar as well as I? Already my place has been taken, but how is it being filled? Write and tell me. I shall be curious to hear, for I know well that if she plays false notes or doesn't come in at the right moment you will hate her. I have had my punishment, but yours isn't over yet—a long punishment of false notes. I am sorry for you, Father Gogarty. . . . My sorrow will seem to you somewhat factitious: I don't pretend that it is quite genuine. I'm sorry for you in a way, but at the bottom of my heart I am afraid I shall always think that you only got your deserts. I stayed in Garranard to please you; now, is it my fault if your pleasure has become your punishment?

"Perhaps you are thinking I did wrong to linger in Garranard. No doubt changes of purpose are unwise, but that change of intention on the roadside was unpremeditated. I didn't know at the time I was changing my

mind; I just acted on the impulse. If I had gone then, I should have been saved a great deal of trouble, no doubt, but I should have missed my share of life. And what I have been through was a great mental awakening; I have learnt a great deal physically and mentally. There was plenty of time for thinking in the two months before baby was born. . . . You, too, have had time for thinking, and your thoughts have brought you to the point of asking my forgiveness. You have been roused out of the lethargy of conventional conscience, and have come to look upon human nature with more kindly eyes.

"Father O'Grady has told you of the difficulties I met with, and I suppose I did meet with considerable difficulty in getting work, in finding rooms—landladies look askance at young women who don't wear wedding rings and are going to have babies. Father O'Grady has told you all about Mrs. Dent—I needn't go over the story again. She was very kind; but there are always Mrs. Dents, and I should have pulled through somehow. So long as one does not despair, so long as one doesn't look upon life bitterly, things work out fairly well in the end. Where there's a will there's a way. The real injury you did was not, as I have said, a material, but a sentimental one; your callous silence disheartened me. Not one letter to inquire whether I was alive or dead! I didn't know then why you didn't write, though more than once I suspected you were a victim of habit and prejudice; your personal intelligence and sympathies were overruled, and during those months you were the typical priest who looks upon women as the deadly peril and the

difficulty of temporal life. After awhile your intelligence began to assert itself, and the natural man to suspect the humanity of the code which orders that the infected sheep shall be driven out of the fold lest the rest of the flock become contaminated. This is the usual jargon, and I have heard so much of it from Father O'Grady that it comes to my tongue quite easily. He is so very indignant against the method whereby a high moral standard is obtained in Ireland that it often seems strange to me he should be at once so liberal-minded and so narrow; for I am sure he thinks my dear little baby has caused the Almighty a great deal of pain. He cannot look upon my baby as a natural accident; he looks upon her as a sin because I am not married, and so do you—a sin the Almighty would punish with damnation if the Church didn't intervene between His wrath and the sinner. I allow myself this one allusion to the theological side of the question. It might have been better to have omitted it; but since I have written it I will let it stand, for it will serve to show you that we can never regard my misfortune in Garranard in quite the same way. I don't think that in our last talk I tried to hide from you that I couldn't accept your view of my offense. We didn't agree then, and I don't suppose we shall ever agree about some things; but I think you will admit now that I did well to withhold the man's name from you. Since I last saw you, you have had time to consider the matter, and I dare say you often say to yourself, 'Well, she was right.' I was right. The man has since died, and who he was is now a matter of very small moment.

"Already this past seems to me more like a dream than anything else—so faint, oh, so faint! When I try to remember, it seems to elude me just as a dream might. I am the same Rose Leicester as you knew, only more so—more convinced than ever that the moment only is real and important. Whither I am going I know not; I only know this, that I am moving toward my destiny. The sensation is delightful. It comes now and then caressing my cheek like a breeze; and I often feel it about me as I sit at my window in Wilson Street when I come home in the evening after a hard day's work.

"I am still earning only two pounds a week; but that makes no difference, for I feel that every day I am approaching my natural destiny. London is my natural home. Will you believe me if I tell you that I always knew I should come to London, even when I was a little girl on the farm, sitting under a tree with no one to keep me company but an old sheep dog? I knew then that I should come to London and meet learned and distinguished men, and here I am; the learned and distinguished men will come later. Meanwhile, everyone is helping me, consciously and unconsciously. It seems as if a vast conspiracy were at work, the purpose of which is to lift me out of my present circumstances; and so sure am I of this that when I come home in the evening I always ask my landlady if anyone has called. I expect to be told that a duke has called, and has left some flowers for me—the landlady should know he was a duke by the armorial bearings on his carriage—and when she answers, 'No, miss; no one has called,' so convinced am

I that the delay is accidental that I go up to my lonely room quite satisfied. I am not quite sure whether he is a duke or a prince, but I incline toward the dukedom.

"It will seem to you that I am a little mad, that I do not know what I am talking about, but I know very well. I have been long wanting to write these things to some one, and your letters afforded me an opportunity of putting the thoughts that fill my mind upon paper. Moreover, I would have you understand that it is not my fault, but the fault of my destiny, dear Father Gogarty, if I cannot accept your sister's offer. Your project does not fall in with the general scheme of my life—that's how it is. But you must not think me ungrateful. I know the offer would not have been made except for you. It was kind of you to think of asking your sister to propose to engage me as teacher in the convent, and I think I can see you putting the old gray horse into the car; I think I can see the poor old fellow trotting round the lake, saying to himself, 'I wish there were no such things as sinful schoolmistresses in the world.' But though my destiny is certainly not in Garranard, I should be sorry to think that we shall never meet again. We shall meet somewhere, for sure—in London, perhaps. You will come to London some day, and you will go to see Father O'Grady, and then I will sing a beautiful *Ave Maria* for you that you have not heard.

"Meanwhile I hope this letter will not disappoint you too much—above all, I hope it will not turn you against me. You see, dear Father Gogarty, I must write as I feel. If I didn't do that, there would be no good in my

writing, my letter wouldn't be myself, and it was myself that you liked, and this letter is like me. You will not be angry—I will not have it—and you will write very soon, and tell me you are not angry, and that you prefer I should write to you exactly as I feel.

"Very sincerely yours,

"Rose Leicester."

The post had brought another letter. He had already noticed the handwriting; it was Father O'Grady's, and he felt that if it had come from anybody else he would not have read it.

From Father O'Grady to Father Oliver Gogarty.

"June 8, 19—.

"My dear Father Gogarty:

"I was very glad to hear from you that Miss Leicester had told her story truthfully. If she had exaggerated or indulged in the faintest equivocation, it would have been a great disappointment to me and to her friends, and it would have put me in a very difficult position, for I should have had to tell certain friends of mine, to whom I had recommended her, that she was not at all what we had imagined her to be. She is, I believe, writing to you by this post, and will tell you that I have appointed her organist in my church. It remains, therefore, only for me to thank you for your manly letter acknowledging the mistake you have made.

"I can imagine the anxiety it must have caused you, and the great relief it must have been to you to get my

letter. Although Miss Leicester spoke with bitterness, she did not try to persuade me that you were naturally hard-hearted or cruel. The impression that her story left on my mind was that your allusions to her in your sermon were unpremeditated. Your letter is proof that I was not mistaken, and I am sure the lesson you have received will bear fruit. I trust that you will use your influence to restrain other priests from similar violence. It is only by gentleness and kindness that we can do good. Miss Leicester tells me that she said in her letter to you that I shall be glad to see you if you ever come to London. I repeat this invitation here.

"I am, sir,

"Very sincerely yours,

"FATHER O'GRADY, P.P."

"Not much in that," he said; and Father O'Grady's letter dropped from his hand, and taking up Rose's, he wondered if he should answer it, and how he should answer it. There was an inclination humming within him that he would do well to burn her letter. But to burn it he would have to get a match, and it would take some time in burning.

As he sauntered around the garden, stopping every now and then to pick the dead blooms away, he grew angry against Rose, and he began to think of what he could write to annoy her, to humiliate her, and all kinds of rancor passed through his mind, taking the shape of an entire letter, phrase for phrase, comma for comma. So clear was the letter in his mind that he had to go into

the house to write it. But for some reason, dark to himself, he drifted away from his writing table, and, taking up a book, he sank into his armchair. But he couldn't read. His eyes soon strayed from the page, and he sat looking into a corner of the room, thinking the whole thing was at an end. . . . There was no reason why he shouldn't dismiss it from his mind. On her own admission he had done her no material wrong, only a moral wrong. She had allowed Father O'Grady to think she had been hardly used. She had flattered him, appealed to his prejudices, played the hypocrite.

A little while afterwards he was surprised to find himself arguing against this view. Father O'Grady was clearly a man of one idea, and that a very common idea, too—that the Irish priest who remains at home is a poor, uncultured creature. Of what use would it be for her to oppose his idea? She wouldn't be likely to change Father O'Grady's opinions, and she was dependent upon his recommendation and assistance. And he began to regret the letter he had written to Father O'Grady. No good had come of it, nor of his scruples of conscience.

Overcome by a sudden pain, he threw the book he was reading on the table, and walked out of the house quickly. Half an hour after he stood at the end of the sandy spit like a prisoner beside his prison bars, staring across the lake, thinking that in a few days the unfortunate affair would have passed from his mind. She had said that her past seemed to her as faint as a dream, and the part she had played in his life would grow fainter and fainter, for he would never see her again.

Without being aware of any transition of feeling, his mood changed, gently, imperceptibly, as the light changed on the lake, and he found himself at last musing over the past, remembering that she had said in her letter that she had remained in the parish only on account of her liking for him, because she knew that he couldn't leave it. . . . But was this true? She gave what she had for giving, as we all do. She couldn't give all her life, and he had been angry with her because she didn't choose to leave London to come back to teach in a convent. Would he have come back in her place? With a sigh he answered his question, and, turning from the lake, he wended his way homeward, a dark spot moving slowly along the gray shore. His mood had changed again, and he listened to the voice of prudence whispering in his ear, telling him that it would be wiser not to answer her letter, "but to let the matter drop." But then all kinds of specious arguments began in his mind—if he did not answer her letter she would write again, and perhaps a third time. In front of such persistency it would be impossible for him to maintain silence. Moreover, she was friendless in London. Father O'Grady was no more than an acquaintance. He had done her a wrong—a material wrong or a moral wrong, perhaps both. Was he justified, etc.? A fortnight after she received this letter.

From Father Oliver Gogarty to Miss Rose Leicester.

"GARRANARD, BOHOLA,
"June 27, 19—.

"DEAR MISS LEICESTER:

"I had so entirely set my heart on bringing you back here, and making atonement for the wrong I did you, that it would be unnatural if your letter were not a great disappointment to me, and I do not know that my disappointment is relieved to any very large extent by the news you send me of your happiness and your hopes. The truth is your letter alarmed me a good deal, and that is why I did not answer it at once. I felt I must have time to think over it and to consider how I should answer it, for an ill-considered word is often the cause, as I know to my cost, of a disaster. It is now more than a fortnight since I got your letter, and I have read what you wrote to me several times, and in order to guard against a false impression I put your letter aside for some days, and then took it up again. Every time I turn to it I feel more and more that for you to live alone in London, making your bread casually, as it were from door to door, is fraught with danger. God will watch over you, it is true, and Father O'Grady is always at hand to advise you; but I feel more strongly day by day that you will do well to consider my sister's offer again and again. I speak to you as a priest, and I am sure you will secure a more permanent happiness by returning to your own country, and living among those who share the same religious views as yourself, than you can possibly attain in London.

"After finishing the last sentence, I laid down the pen and took up your letter and glanced through it again, and this time the passage that alarmed me is the one in which you describe yourself waiting for brilliant fortune, which, in the shape of a prince or a duke, will some day come knocking at your door, and carry you away in a painted carriage like a lady in a fairy tale. Of course, I do not take your words literally. I understand you to mean that your character is such a one as leads inevitably to fame and fortune by a series of steps which appear accidental, but which are derived from the personal character you brought into the world. If my deeply regretted mistake does not debar me from uttering a word of warning—and the tone of your letter would lead me to think that I still retain some small portion of your confidence—I would beg of you not to lend too ready an ear to the specious promises that a youthful and strenuous imagination is whispering in your ear. We cannot be too much on our guard against the temptations that Life spreads for our feet, as a fowler spreads his net. You believe Fortune's door to be thrown open, and you not very far away, at the end of the street, waiting for her to sign to you to come forward. Sweet perfumes and fine linen tempt you from within, and you must have said, 'Dear me, those poor people in Garranard, simple-minded folk, think I should give up all this and go back to teach music in a convent!' A shudder passed through you, and I can easily imagine how your heart must have filled with joy when your eyes went to your window. I suppose Wilson Street is not a very grand street—on two

pounds a week one does not live in a very fashionable quarter—but however meager the prospect Wilson Street affords, its appearance reminds you immediately that you are in London, that you are free, that the West of Ireland is forever behind you. I have little hope that any words of mine will dissuade you from the illusion of success and the pleasure of seeing and hearing all the sights and sounds that go to make life beautiful and enticing. What can I say? What could those more eloquent than I say? What could the psalmist say? He could but ask you of what value are life's pleasures with death at the end of them all? But death seems to you very far away now, and you would give very little heed even to the psalmist were he to appear in person. Life is as mysterious as death, and the more we think of it the more wonderful does it seem to us. You have just come out of a great danger which your temperament led you into, yet you tell me that it is precisely on your temperament that you rely to lead you aright.

"I let my pen run on though I place no hope on it to persuade you. Were I by you I might influence you somewhat. But no; when I was by you I failed. I was the victim of an illusion like yourself. What my illusion was I know not, but I was certainly deluded, and led by my temperament into error. Far better that Father O'Grady should be your guardian. If anyone can influence you it will be he, and I beg of you to put your trust in him now. I am tempted to ask if you have spoken to him as openly as you have to me in your last letter? Have you told him that the wrong I did you was

rather a moral than a material wrong? Not that I would have you exonerate me or say a word that would extenuate my conduct in his eyes. He would probably understand very little and care very little about moral wrongs. He is, I can see, a man with a fixed idea, one of those Irish priests living in England who think themselves superior to the Irish priest who knows no culture except such as Maynooth can give him. You tell me that he regards me as an exception, and this seems strange, for, judged by my conduct, who has shown himself to be more ignorant, more narrow-minded than I, more Irish, if you will? This much, however, may be said for me, that very soon I saw I had been guilty of an error of judgment. Except that temporary blindness, occasioned by a burst of passion, I fail to see that I have lacked perception. On the contrary, I am afraid I am only too susceptible to every shade of feeling, and err from overscrupulousness. Will you understand me when I tell you I cannot rid myself of the idea that I do not altogether welcome the opinion you expressed that I did you no material wrong? Here abstract wrongs do not appeal to us; and it seems to me that I miss the tragedy of my remorse just as the convalescent may in a sense regret the excitement and the danger that he has passed through. I can imagine a convalescent looking forward with fear to the struggle of life soon to begin again; for sure the poor man in the hospital thinks like this, and I am a very poor man from henceforth. I can see only gray years, without adventure, without ambition, without hope in front of me. I dare say that some new illusion will arise, but for the

moment life seems exactly like a desert, and I cannot but think the crossing of this desert will prove infinitely wearisome. Our lives are strangely opposed. You are full of strength, and hope, and joy; I am depressed and weak. Yet I ask you to come back here. There is something incongruous in my request, but the incongruity is more apparent than real, for I know I am advising you for the best. We all suffer from depression occasionally, and we are all too liable to forget that every mood is a passing mood. My mood will pass, I know, but for the moment it is myself. There are reasons, and excellent ones, why I should be depressed. The choir was a great interest, and the choir has been taken from me. The same girls raise their voices; they generally sing the right notes; but the singing is, nevertheless, quite different. A piece of music that under your leadership took four minutes, under Eva Maguire's takes six. Everything drags—the choir and the school. The lessons are long and tedious, the schoolmistress tires me; I have great difficulty in keeping my temper, and, fearing I may lose it, I do not go to the school every morning. Nor can I say that I think more of her harmonium playing than I do of her method of teaching children. Nor does her arrangement of flowers on the altar please me.

"A holiday would do me good, but I do not think the present time is the one for me to choose to go away. But your suggestion that when I go to London I shall call on Father O'Grady is an excellent one. I am deeply grateful to him for his kindness to you, and for this and many other reasons forgive him the superior tone he

adopts toward Irish priests who live in their own country, and doubtless fall into errors of judgment. When I go to London I shall talk to him about you; if you are still his organist, if your temperament has not whirled you away down a path of dazzling success, we shall meet, and I shall have the pleasure of hearing you sing. But I am doubtful about many things, and no doubt this letter is full of contradictions. It will, I fear, produce very little effect; but I have no reason to suppose that if I were to delay writing I should write a more effectual letter. We shall meet some day, perhaps when we are both quite different, when the past has become as faint as a dream. It has already become as faint for you; I am afraid I must wait a little longer.

"Very sincerely yours,

"OLIVER GOGARTY, P.P."

From Miss Rose Leicester to Father Oliver Gogarty.

"5 CUMBERLAND PLACE, LONDON,
"June 27, 19—.

"You have delayed a long while to answer my letter; I am sure it is nearly three weeks since I wrote to you. Perhaps the reason you have not written is because I would not leave London and return to Ireland to teach music in Tinnick Convent. Or did my letter displease you so much that you have made up your mind not to write to me again? I must know. You must confide in me; I will not allow you to be cross with me. There has been crossness enough and to spare between us. As soon

as you have read this letter sit down and answer it, and at a great length, for, although I have gone away and do not mean to come back, I am still interested in Garranard. You must tell me all its sayings and doings. You may not think them interesting, but they will amuse me. If my letter displeased you, I am sorry; I thought I had said very many pleasant things in it. Did I not tell you that when you came to London you were to go to see Father O'Grady, and that you and he were to talk about me? Did I not say that I would sing a beautiful *Ave Maria* for you, one you have not heard, and one which I think, if I know your taste in music, you will like exceedingly?

"The more I think the more pretty things do I seem to have said in my unanswered letter, written more than a fortnight ago. I think I told you, and if I didn't I should have told you, that you must not let your conscience trouble you any more about the wrong you have done me. Didn't I say that? But perhaps I am wronging you, perhaps you have been ill, perhaps you are ill. If so, get Catherine to write for you. No, you cannot be ill; I cannot imagine you ill. I have never heard of your being ill. I am writing to you because I cannot help myself. I want to tell you that my prophecy has come true. You remember that I wrote something in my letter to the effect that I put my faith in my own personality to carry me straight on toward success. I told you I had always foreseen that my future would be in London, and that I used to sit talking about London to the old sheep dog under the fir tree; and to cheer you up

I told you that the time I spent in Wilson Street before my baby was born, that terrible time, was not so terrible as I expected it would be.

"My letter was really a very nice one. Didn't I tell you that I was happy? though when I wrote to you about my happiness I didn't feel quite sure that this last piece of news would please you, for human nature is very perverse, and we only care to hear of another's happiness when we are the givers of it. I am afraid I should feel like that myself; but you mustn't feel like that, you must like to hear that I am making friends wherever I go, and you must become reconciled to the idea that, though I was a dissonance in Ireland, I am part of the English harmony. And it is such a pleasure to find one's self in harmony with one's surroundings, everything going to the beat, one's ideas chiming with the ideas about one, one's work interesting one so much that one goes to it smiling along the street, anxious to be at it, wondering what the result of the day's work will be, if this pupil will be able to play a little exercise better than she played it yesterday, if another one will be able to sing a note more clearly.

"It is easy to say these things do not matter much, they matter a great deal; for when these things go right we are happy; when they don't, we are depressed.

"I chatter freely about myself, for there are times when one feels that one must unbosom one's self, and I am afraid I am not a very reticent person. I know I lack reticence; but then, if I remember right, you liked my impulsiveness—you used to say that I was nearer to the

primitive woman than anyone you had ever met. So is it my fault if I write to you about myself? What would Father O'Grady understand if I were to tell him that I tripped home every evening to Wilson Street, smiling as I went along, checking myself occasionally, lest a passer-by should think me mad; my head filled with stories, stories singing in my head together, and all going to the self-same tune, and myself the heroine of every story? What should the dear man understand if I told him, as I told you, that I walked home possessed by an inveterate belief that a prince or a duke had called to see me? He would have asked me for my reasons for thinking that a prince or a duke had rapped at the door of No. 4 Wilson Street, in the course of the afternoon; he would want to know how the prince or the duke had heard of my existence, and of course I should not have been able to answer these questions.

"We have a foreknowledge of the future in its general lines, but we may not know the workings out of the various transformation scenes. And when I said a prince or a duke would, like the harlequin in the pantomime, order the change of scene, I only knew a great change was coming. So I was not discouraged when the landlady told me there was no letter, or handed me one from a mamma asking me if I could give her daughter her lesson in the afternoon instead of in the morning. I just went upstairs, as I told you, and sat by my window watching the sky fading, thinking all the while what a splendid thing it was to be in London, and how much more beautiful was the view even from Wilson Street—the view

from my window is of some dirty railings with children playing about them—than the sunlit hollows and the refined melancholy of Garranard. Never for a moment did I doubt my good fortune, and, to pass the time before I went to bed, I used to invent little stories how the duke who was coming to see me was not satisfied with the buckles on his shoes, and had turned back to get new ones. Once he ordered his valet to the scaffold, and will you believe it was I who pleaded and saved the poor servant's life? The next day I was inclined to believe that the duke's carriage had broken down, and, having dislocated his shoulder against a lamp post, the duke was obliged to postpone his visit to No. 4 Wilson Street until he got well again; and will you believe me when I tell you that it was I who nursed him? I sat by his sick bed. It was a four-post bed with a carved top. Charles the Second, who was the duke's irregular ancestor, had slept in that bed, and lo! I sat there handing him mixtures prepared by a learned doctor who had come all the way from Trinidad. Why from Trinidad I cannot for the life of me tell you.

"My vagrant imagination must not be cross-questioned. It foresaw my future correctly enough, though it was neither a prince nor a duke who sought me out in Wilson Street, but a great writer—not a poet, but a writer on learned subjects. When I say he is not a poet I do not mean he is a writer who is insensible to poetry—a dry-as-dust Greek or Hebrew scholar. Mr. Ralph Ellis began his literary career by writing verse; but, feeling it were useless to write verse unless one were a great

poet—and to be a great poet one must have a special voice, and a poet's voice is as rare as De Reszke's—feeling that he had not this voice, Mr. Ellis abandoned poetry for scholarship.

"His views on poetry are original, and I wonder what you, who have read the poets, would think of them. According to Mr. Ellis, the poet is one who can tiddle-diddle-diddle like a canary in a cage; many men philosophize and psychologize and botanize in verse; but writing in meter does not constitute a poet, nor does the invention of beautiful images and harmonious sentences. The poets, according to the tiddle-diddle-diddle doctrine, are Shakespeare, Shelley, Swinburne, and Edgar Allan Poe. Mr. Ellis admits that he had some hesitation regarding Keats, but, after rereading the lines on a 'Grecian Urn,' and the 'Ode to the Nightingale,' he decided he must reject him. He read aloud yesterday Keats's 'Ode to the Nightingale,' and Shelley's 'Ode to the Skylark,' and I was obliged to admit that Shelley does the tiddle-diddle-diddle better than Keats.

"The same doctrine may be applied to music. Beethoven, he points out, does the tiddle-diddle-diddle much better than Bach. Mozart does it better than—no, not better than Beethoven; but he does it better than Gluck. The question Mr. Ellis and I are debating now is, could Wagner tiddle-diddle-diddle? I suppose he could, for, otherwise, how should we explain the 'Song of the Bird' in 'Siegfried'? Mr. Ellis plays very well, and we have been through the opera. But, before I tell you any more about Mr. Ralph Ellis's accomplishments,

I must tell you who he is, and how I made his acquaintance.

"Mr. Ralph Ellis is the father of Miss Edith Ellis, a charming girl of fourteen, one of my pupils, a pretty blonde girl with bright eyes, and with many reflections of her father in her face. I dare not say she is like her father, for is a woman ever like a man? She has bright sunny hair and intense eyes, and—but you are not interested in Edith, and why should you be? What has Miss Edith Ellis got to do with you? If I am to tell you about any of the family, it must be about Mr. Ellis himself. He lives with his daughter in a house in Cumberland Place, but his home is in Berkshire, which, so far as I can judge from photographs and descriptions, must be a delightfully romantic spot, very like the pictures one sees in galleries. And I am Mr. Ellis's secretary! He came into the room the other day when I was giving Edith her lesson to ask me if I knew anyone who could copy a manuscript. I knew no one, but, acting on the impulse of the moment, I said that, if the manuscript were not very difficult, I would be very glad to try to copy it for him, 'if it is neither Greek nor Hebrew,' I said, lowering my eyes. 'It is neither,' he answered. 'It is in my own handwriting. It is a chapter of my new book. Do you think you can copy it?' I raised my eyes very gently, and said: 'I should like to try.' I did try, and I succeeded so well that Mr. Ellis has asked me to go to Berkshire to act as his secretary and teach his daughter music.

"Edith and I are great friends. I have been teach-

ing her since I came to London, and she is delighted with the arrangement, and has begged of me to accept her father's proposal. Her mother died years ago, and she has never had a companion, so her desire for me to go to Ethelstone Manor is comprehensible enough. She has lived alone with her father, and is too young to be much interested in libraries. She is interested in her singing and in her pony. She and I go for drives together, and she talks incessantly of the places she will show me.

"But again I am drifting back to telling you about Edith, whereas I should be telling you about Mr. Ellis. He resembles extraordinarily the idea I had formed of him before seeing him, only he is younger looking. Edith, as I told you, is fourteen, so he must have married when he was very young, for I don't think he can be more than thirty-five. He could hardly be less, for it is seldom that a man marries before he is three-and-twenty. I am sure he cannot be more than thirty-seven. At first sight he does not look more than thirty. He is tall and clean-shaven, with a high nose, which goes well with his eyeglass. The chin is long and remarkable; his hair is mustard color and glossy, and it curls very prettily about the broad, well-shaped forehead.

"His manner is distant at first. He is reserved, and this lends a charm to the permission which he very soon grants you of making acquaintance with those thoughts and ideas which have interested him since boyhood, and which have given him his character. If he seems at first sight to conceal himself from you, it is either from shyness or because he sees no reason why he should allow

you the privilege of walking about in his mind as in a public place. I am sure he regards his mind as certain people regard their parks and pleasure grounds—as places for themselves and their friends' recreation. He is exceedingly himself, and strangely unforeseen. All the forms of his thought are individual. One doesn't know the mold he has come out of. He lives so much in himself that he is called egotistic by many. But so would *Hamlet,* the character in fiction which I think he resembles most. He doesn't, however, dress in black. I cannot expect you to be interested in another man's clothes, but surely a predominant note of color is not without significance, and that is why I tell you that he dresses nearly always in gray.

"I said in the beginning of this letter that he was once a poet. The expression is a false one; I should have said that he has ceased to write verse; but though he no longer writes in meter, he has not ceased to make use of his poetic gifts. He uses them now and to excellent advantage; for they enable him to make a learned subject intelligible and fascinating. His subject is—you would never guess it, not if you were to guess for a thousand years—his subject is the Bible! I can see you throw up your arms. And what a fine gesture it is! Don't I know it well? And can't I hear you cry out, 'Good heavens! my schoolmistress writing about the ancient Hebrews and their God—our God! Jehovah.' My dear Father Gogarty, that is not the way you should spell the Almighty's name; we spell it here Eahveh. Strange things happen, and will you believe me when I tell you

that I take a great interest in my work, and hope to begin the study of Hebrew very soon? Yourself encouraged me to learn Latin, so why should it be incongruous for me to learn Hebrew and congruous to learn Latin? If the language of Rome is Latin, the language of Jerusalem was Hebrew, or, to be exact, Syro-Chaldean. And the importance of Jerusalem cannot be considered less than that of Rome, for, whereas only popes live in Rome, Himself preached and died in Jerusalem.

"Mr. Ellis has been twice to Jerusalem, and the notes he took as he rode across the desert are full of color and animation. He watched and noted all that the eye can see, of the color of the skies and the color and the shapes of the earth, from the back of the young dromedary which bore him from morn till eve along the shores of the Sea of Akabah. These shores are covered with shells wonderfully voluted, and he has brought many home. At the end of the third day, when they left the sea behind them, a troop of gazelles sprang up out of some low bushes and fled before them. Wasn't it wonderful? Every night he wrote in his tent, transcribing the impressions of the day, and he wrote on until the pencil fell from his hand and sleep was no longer to be resisted. The manuscript prepared under these conditions has to be revised afterwards, but, I assure you, that some of his descriptions of the desert which will appear in his book are transcribed almost word for word from his notebook, and these descriptions will enable the reader to realize the wanderings of the early Hebrews about Mount Sinai before they settled in Palestine. He lived

six months in Galilee, and his description of the landscape will transport the reader, and he will follow Christ at a distance, seeing Him among His disciples. The poet will therefore act as a sort of agent in advance to the man of learning. You may, as Mr. Ellis often says, know every secret of heaven and earth, and your knowledge will avail you nothing if you are not a poet, if you cannot give a literary form to your knowledge.

"Mr. Ellis is a poet, and his poetry will gain him a thousand readers where all the learning of the scholars would not gain him ten. I am amazed at the interest with which I listen to him; he enlivens the driest subjects with wit. He puts his old eyeglass into his left eye, and I can see that he is amused at the tediousness of his studies. 'How,' he says, 'shall I poetize these minor prophets?' And I confess it is difficult to do so. Have you ever read them, Father Gogarty? They are very tedious.

"Mr. Ellis was speaking yesterday of Hosea and Amos, and, passing from them, he told me how a light had suddenly been thrown on certain obscure passages in the Book of Daniel, how a certain German— I cannot tell you the story, it has suddenly slipped out of my mind, but, I assure you, it was as exciting as any riddle. As for Jeremiah, I already seem to know him; I can see him when he was pulled out of the well more dead than alive, cursing profusely, pouring out imprecations with the volubility of an Irish tinker come from a fair, his head fairly broken. I have only been a week with Mr. Ellis, and I foresee that Jeremiah will become a very

intimate acquaintance of mine; all last evening was spent reading his Jeremiads, and if I know him so well in London, what will it be when we go down to Berkshire.

"To-day Mr. Ellis is reading in the British Museum. There are few books here, but his library in Berkshire is, I hear, one of the finest private libraries in England, and every window looks out on the park. Think of me sitting there learning Hebrew, raising my eyes now and again to admire the curves of the beautiful trees showing against the sky, and the great branches of the copper beeches sweeping the green turf. There are a number of deer in the park, and they come down to drink at the pond. That is all I know of Ethelstone Manor, but I will write to you and tell you my impressions of the library and the park. We are going there in a few days, and to tell you this is one of my reasons in writing to you, for I should be disappointed if you were to come to London, and I was not here to sing the *Ave Maria* for you. We are, I believe, going abroad at the end of July. Miss Ellis wants to go to Germany to hear some music. But nothing is settled yet.

"I told you in my first letter that something was going to happen to me—well, that something has happened, and, so far as I can judge from a week's experience, I am perfectly satisfied.

"Very sincerely yours,

"Rose Leicester."

From Father Oliver Gogarty to Miss Rose Leicester.

"GARRANARD, BOHOLA,
"June 29, 19—.

"Our letters crossed. Both letters were posted on Thursday evening, so while I am reading your letter about Mr. Ralph Ellis and his writings you are reading my explanation why I did not answer your letter at once. I think I omitted to say that your letter alarmed me so much that I thought more than once of sending it on to Father O'Grady, and if I did not do so it was because my first blunder has rendered me cautious. I remembered that I had no right to show your letter to anyone. A letter is a bewildering thing; even the most ordinary letters often fill one with doubt. If Father Moran were to write to me saying he would call at three o'clock tomorrow, and if he didn't arrive punctually, if he were half an hour late, I should be walking up the room, going to the front door; and having considered every possible accident, sick calls, broken bicycles, I should turn to his letter and wonder what day he meant when he wrote 'tomorrow,' asking myself if the letter were written before 12 P.M. or A.M. Now, if a simple note making an appointment can give rise to so much conjecturing, it is easy to imagine the restlessness such a letter as yours would stir up in one as intimately concerned in your welfare as I am.

"Knowing you as I do, I was disposed to look upon the whimsical fancies expressed in your first letter as the natural bent of your mind, without particular significance,

and many things predisposed me to take this view. I could not forget that I wished you to leave London. 'Maybe,' I said, 'this wish predisposes me to believe that she is not safe in London. I am a prejudiced person.' Then I remembered suddenly, after posting the letter, that you were working under the guidance of Father O'Grady, and I was seized with qualms of conscience, and returned home asking if I did well in writing to you as strongly as I did. It seemed to me my letter might be regarded as impugning the validity of Father O'Grady's sanction and guidance.

"'Now what position does my letter put me in?' I said to myself. 'I drove a woman out of my parish to live or die as best she could. She meets a good Samaritan, who extends a friendly hand, and puts her in the way of earning her bread, but on the first opportunity I intervene again, and use every effort in my power to get her away from him. Not only do I do this, I even ventured to criticise him, advancing as an argument that he had deserted his country.'

"I walked home overcome, alarmed at my own incapacity, feeling myself entirely unable to cope with life, and I do not think anything could have dissipated this mood except your last letter. I see now that I was suffering from what is known as a false conscience: my scruples were fictitious. Of course, I did quite right in asking you to return to Ireland. I am quite sure now that Father O'Grady would not have disapproved of the letter I wrote to you: he certainly would not if I were to send him the letter which you have written to me. He

would say: 'Your suspicions that London is a great danger for a young woman like her are fully justified by her letter. Only by a miracle can she live there without falling—I will not say into sin, but into the dangerous occasions of sin.' There is, I admit, no single passage in your letter which by itself would seem a sufficient cause for my anxiety. It may be quite true that Eahveh is a more correct spelling than the usual spelling; I'm not in a position to argue the point, but I certainly think that you might have expressed yourself more reverently; nor can I approve of the way in which you speak of Jerusalem and Rome, though there is no doubt that what you say is true. I find fault not so much with what you say as with the levity with which you express yourself. Another point. You say you are sure I will agree with you that 'it would be madness to miss this opportunity.' The opportunity of what, may I ask? Of acquiring some pseudo-knowledge regarding the early Hebrews? You do not say whether Mr. Ellis is a Catholic or a Protestant. From the very nature of his studies I find it difficult to believe that he is a Catholic. Biblical exegesis does not as a rule attract Catholics. It is a study confined to Protestants and to agnostics, and the result is, I am afraid, rather to create unbelievers than converts.

"Father O'Grady said in his first letter to me that a priest who drives a woman out of the parish must not think that the responsibility ends at the boundary of his parish. In many respects the circumstances of your case are quite different from the girls who leave Ireland because they have outraged the moral law, but I agree with

Father O'Grady that my responsibility is a serious one; it is even more serious than I thought, for I am still pledged to your spiritual safety. I shall be glad to have some assurance from you that Mr. Ellis doesn't try to influence you in your faith."

He stopped writing, for he had begun to feel that his letter was absurd, and when his thoughts turned toward Rose he could only think of her as an unscrupulous little wanton, determined to get as much pleasure as she could out of life. But he didn't want to regard her as a wanton; and his face clouded, and he frowned when he remembered the enthusiasm with which she had spoken of Mr. Ellis's learning. It would be better not to send this letter; it would be better not to write to her any more. And he experienced an indefinite fear that this correspondence might lead him into difficulties. But into what difficulties? Not being able to define his fears, he dismissed them as unworthy.

"Nothing will be gained by writing," he muttered to himself. Though he felt quite sure on this point, he knew he would send his letter. Then he grew a little alarmed; for his will seemed to have suddenly receded from him. The sensation was a strange one.

As he sat thinking the door was suddenly flung open.

"Father Moran, your reverence."

"I can see by your face, Moran, that you have come to talk to me about the roofing of the abbey. You've arranged something with the bishop; or is it that you

find that the blue slates on which you have set your heart are more expensive than you thought?"

"I'm sorry, Gogarty, if I'm disturbing you. I'll go away."

"You aren't disturbing me. I've just finished a letter which must be posted to-night."

"You'll hardly be able to catch the post;" and Father Moran looked at his watch. "You'll have to walk fast."

"Now, what will you do? Will you wait here until I come back, or will you come with me?"

"I don't mind walking to Bohola with you. I'm not tired; the walk will do me good."

"And you'll tell me about the abbey and our diocesan on the way. But if I take you all the way to Bohola, you'll not be able to come back here to supper."

"Oh, yes, I shall."

"And walk home afterwards?"

"Yes. Five miles more or less won't make any difference to me. I'll leave my papers on your table. This is a copy of *Illustrated England*. I thought you might like to look at it."

"*Illustrated England* is it?" And Father Oliver took up the paper, and was about to turn over the leaves, when Father Moran reminded him that, if they were to catch the post at Bohola, they would have to start at once. "Very well; but I must tell Catherine that you'll stay to supper. She wouldn't forgive me if I didn't." And Father Gogarty ran into the kitchen to ask his servant if she would get something nice for Father Moran's supper. "We shall be back in a couple of hours."

Catherine said she would do what she could; Father Gogarty hastened to join Father Moran, who was waiting for him outside, and the copy of *Illustrated England* lay on the table until Catherine came to put the cloth on for the priests' supper. She threw the paper into the corner of the room; it got hidden away under a mass of other newspapers; and it was an accident that brought it to light some few days afterwards, and Catherine could not understand what there could be in the paper that had so suddenly and completely absorbed his reverence's attention.

The newspaper contained an account of Mr. Ellis's book, "The Source of the Christian River." The journalist who contributed the article to *Illustrated England* looked upon Mr. Ellis as a great man, and the interview he had been sent down to do as the beginning of his literary career. So, with the evident intention of writing attractively, he began with some allusion to his own pious childhood and his religious bringing-up. That such a person as himself, the son of a Wesleyan minister, should be chosen to interview Mr. Ellis seemed to him a sign of the times.

VIII

From Father Oliver Gogarty to Miss Rose Leicester.

"GARRANARD, BOHOLA,
"July 7, 19—.

I WROTE to you a few days ago what may have seemed a cross letter, but I did not intend to be cross: I wrote in a hurry, and I had no time to consider my words. I wrote under the stress of the emotion produced by the long letter in which you told me you had resigned your post of organist, and were going down to Berkshire to act as secretary to Mr. Ralph Ellis and as music mistress to his daughter. Perhaps it would be better if, after writing a letter, one were to put it by and read it over in the morning. Letters should not be sent until one were sure that they do not misrepresent one's thoughts and feelings. But I was interrupted in the middle of my letter by a visit from Father Moran; I had just laid down the pen, and was considering what I had written, when he came in. Had he not come in, I should not have finished it till the next day. He reminded me that it was just post time, and suggested we should go out together, and I hastily scribbled a few lines, bringing my letter as well as I could to a conclusion. You know how difficult it is to write with some one walking about the room talking to you from time to time. I am hardly responsible for what I said in that letter, though, so far

as I can remember, it was no more than a somewhat ill-considered epistle.

"But this explanation of the possible harshness of my letter is not my only object in writing to you now. I am writing to tell you that I know far more about Mr. Ralph Ellis than I did when I last wrote. Strange, is it not, that Father Moran should have been sent a copy of *Illustrated England,* and that he should have brought it with him? Catherine threw it away among some papers, and it lay there for two or three days. I accidentally discovered it, and I need hardly tell you that I read with interest the descriptive article about Ethelstone Manor and Mr. Ralph Ellis's new book, 'The Source of the Christian River.' It appears from the article in *Illustrated England* that some of his friends are priests. How this can be, I know not. Why should so antichristian a writer as Mr. Ellis have priests for friends? I do not understand such liberal-mindedness; but since priests come to his house, place yourself, my dear child, under their friendly guidance. Ask them if they approve of your remaining Mr. Ellis's secretary. I do not think they will.

"I thanked God when I got Father O'Grady's letter telling me that you had escaped from the dangers that beset a young woman in London; but, alas! you have fallen into still greater dangers, and I cannot forget that I was the indirect cause of your having met Mr. Ellis. Day after day, week in and week out, you will hear every argument that may be heard against our holy religion. I do not say that Mr. Ellis will try to influence you directly,

but all he gives you to read, and all he says, will be anti-christian doctrine. You have the advantage of being born a Catholic; you were well instructed in your religion, and no doubt you will accept the statements you hear with caution. Knowing that you are a Catholic, Mr. Ellis will, perhaps, spare you as much as possible; very likely he will not try to undermine your faith; but, after all, his words will be always under your eyes, and I do not think it right for a Catholic to undertake work the very object of which is intended to destroy belief in the revealed religion.

"I think I said in my letter that it was I who had driven you out of a Catholic into a Protestant atmosphere, but I did not suspect then that I had driven you into the house of one who evidently hates Christianity, and very possibly hates it in its Catholic form more than in any other. . . . If you lose your faith I am responsible for it, and I am not exaggerating when I say that in my walks, and in my bed at night, the thought is constantly before me that through my fault I may have lost a soul to God. I can imagine no greater responsibility, and there seems to be no way of escaping from it. It seems to me that I suspected this danger from the very first. My dear child, the reading that interests you so much, and the learning you set your heart upon, what will it benefit you if you lose your own soul? It is your most sacred possession. Will you come back here to teach in the convent? I do not ask you, I dare not take up that hope again, but I beseech you to return to Father O'Grady. You made two pounds a week by your teach-

ing in London, and Father O'Grady certainly must have given you a pound a week for playing his organ and teaching in his church. Leave Mr. Ellis; go back to work under the guidance of that good man.

"I beg of you to write to me on this subject, and at once. Remember my anxiety. Tell me what kind of work Mr. Ellis asks from you; above all, tell me if he tries to influence you. Do not accept the assertions he makes without question. The science of yesterday is not the science of to-day, nor will the science of to-day be the science of to-morrow; only the Church remains immutable. Remember that the Church has always an answer for these so-called scientists. I am not qualified to answer or to take up the defense of the Church—I quite recognize and know my own deficiency in this matter; but even I may be able to explain away some doubts that may arise. If so, I beg of you that you will not hesitate to write to me. If I cannot do it myself, I may be able to put you in the way of finding out the best Catholic opinion on matters of doctrine.

"Very sincerely yours,

"OLIVER GOGARTY, P.P."

From Miss Rose Leicester to Father Oliver Gogarty.

"ETHELSTONE MANOR, YARKSDALE,
"July 26, 19—.

"MY DEAR FATHER GOGARTY:

"It is now my turn to write, excusing myself for not having answered your letters before. It is so kind of

you to write to me, and I fear that you must think me neglectful, and perhaps you think I do not understand the interest you take in me. If you think this you are mistaken. Your letter in answer to my long letter about Mr. Ralph Ellis may have been a little stern. How could it be otherwise? For, after all, you are a priest, and after reading it I reproved myself for having written to you so incautiously and given you pain. But you know I cannot restrain myself, I let my tongue run on; I should have said my pen, but writing and talking are the same to me—I write just as I talk. In fact, I think that my letters prattle better than my tongue. Your second letter was full of kindness, and I should have answered it at once if I had not been busily engaged helping Mr. Ellis. He is revising his book before going to press; it all has to be rewritten, and the publisher is clamoring for it, saying that he is missing a golden opportunity of publication. The book has been irrevocably promised for the fifteenth of next month, and by that time the whole of the manuscript must be in the printer's hands, so says the publisher; and Mr. Ellis agrees with him, adding, however, that it is equally necessary that the writing of the book should be perfect.

"So we work at it all the morning and all the afternoon. Sometimes Mr. Ellis dictates to me, sometimes he writes himself, sometimes I have to copy his manuscript, and sometimes I have to read books for him, and hunt up references while he is writing. After four o'clock I belong to Miss Ellis. There is her music, and after her music lesson we go for a walk or a drive; and with all

these duties to attend to, and all these thoughts to think, I found it impossible to gather sufficient collectedness of mind to write you a letter. You know you said that letters were treacherous things and that one should not write one without carefully considering it; that it were even a better thing not to post a letter at once, but to lay it by, and not to send it until one were quite sure that it did not misrepresent one's ideas or convey any false impressions. I am afraid I cannot write like this at all. I take up the pen, and it runs along, and I hardly know what I am writing. If I am interrupted in the middle of a letter I have to tear it up, I cannot go on with it; before writing I have to work myself up, and when my brain begins to catch fire I take up my pen, and I can go on as long as the mood lasts, and sometimes it lasts, as you know, for many pages. Tell me, do you like my letters? They don't bore you, do they? If I thought they did I shouldn't write any more. When you write again you must not forget to answer this question.

"And now I have to answer some questions of yours. You are anxious for my spiritual safety. Well, I assure you that there is no need that you should be. We are not theologians here, we are historians; and Mr. Ellis says the Bible is not only a book of revelation it is also a history and it has a history. And it is the history of the Bible that interests us. This is Mr. Ellis's view of this work, and a priest who comes here thinks the same. The interviewer is quite right in saying that Mr. Ellis has friends among priests as well as among agnostics and Protestants; these men are his friends because they love

learning, not because they hold certain views. And Mr. Ellis thinks that he is justified in seeking out the facts, and the search, he says, is conducted not only in the interests of science but also of theology; for though history owes nothing to theology, it cannot be denied that theology owes a good deal to history.

"In many ways the theologian is dependent on the historian, and what is there unreasonable, Mr. Ellis inquires, in asking theologians to reconsider doctrines raised upon doubtful foundations? True that the theologians have written a great deal and that it will be troublesome for them to revise their opinions; but surely it would be wiser to apply themselves to this task than to ask historians to do what they cannot do—to conceal or to falsify facts. The theologian, Mr. Ellis thinks, is too much given to crying out that the latest discoveries are not facts. Well, if they are not facts they are worthless, and will be discarded. Meanwhile, you think that they occasion many heresies. Well, that is a misfortune; but the pursuit of knowledge must go on, it cannot be stopped. And this you will admit—that science is always willing to rectify any error she may fall into.

"We have been so busy with the last chapters of 'The Source of the Christian River' that I have hardly had time to see the park and the house and the river that runs under the hills. But last evening I was finished earlier than usual, and I walked in the beech wood with Edith, listening to the oars fifty or sixty feet below us; we couldn't see the boats passing, but we could hear the oars chiming, and it was quite dark when we got home. It

would please me to write you a description of the garden. The carnations are just coming out. If I am here when they are in bloom I will write to you about them; but I fear we shall have left, for we are going abroad as soon as the book has been passed for press. I will write to you instead from abroad, telling you about cathedrals, pictures, and libraries, and about the great men we shall see. For Mr. Ellis has been in correspondence from time to time with all the great men of Europe—I mean all those who are occupied with the same work as himself. We are going to visit them: some are in Amsterdam, some are in Paris, some live in Switzerland. Won't it be wonderful seeing them and hearing them talk? I wish I understood French a little better, and I hardly know any German. Edith is going with us, for we are going to Bayreuth to hear Wagner and to Munich to hear Mozart.

"But what will you be doing all this time, dear Father Gogarty? Do you remember how you used to talk to me about the lake and its castles and the hermit? You had never been to Church Island, though you once lived very near it, and you told me a hermit poet lived there once—you know his poetry. Now, why don't you go there and write about the place he lived in, and translate his poems and publish them? What a fascinating book it would make—'The Story of a Lake and its Castles!'

"I should like to go on writing, but I must really stop now, for Edith is waiting for me to go out to walk with her. Good-by, Father Gogarty; I will write to you from

abroad. I do not know from where—from Paris, perhaps, or from Munich—but I will write to you.

"Very sincerely yours,

"ROSE LEICESTER."

From Father Oliver Gogarty to Miss Rose Leicester.

"GARRANARD, BOHOLA,
"July 29, 19—.

"DEAR MISS LEICESTER:

"You ask me to tell you if your letters interest me. Indeed they do. A letter from you relieves the tedium of Garranard. If I had no letter to look forward to I wonder how the days would pass, so laggard have they become; almost any letter would be welcome, but your letters are doubly welcome, so lively are they, so like yourself. You set the scene before one like a picture. I can see you and Mr. Ellis together in the library, bending over the writing table, you on one side, he on the other. I can see you standing on the high steps to get down a tome. You were always eager and alert: I realize your interest in the preparation of this book so well that I have abandoned hope of ever being able to get you back to Garranard, and look upon my drive round the lake and the interview with my sister as a sort of dream. One dreams many things, and though my dream was vain, I hope you will not look upon me as a foolish person because I once dreamed you might return here. Everything depends on the point of view, and I am beginning to understand yours. I did not understand it when I wrote before, but to-day I am a more impartial witness,

and I admit that your position as Mr. Ellis's secretary presents a unique opportunity of educating yourself. So well do I understand your point of view now that I am afraid you must look back with wonder—I will not say with horror—at the time you spent in Garranard teaching little barefooted children their catechism and their A B C. What a task I set myself to persuade you to come back and shut yourself up in a convent to teach children five-finger exercises or to listen to the 'Moonlight Sonata' played out of time, with a liberal sprinkling of false notes! If you were unsuited to Garranard when you were here, you are still more unsuited to it to-day, and I doubt if I should try to persuade you to return even if I were sure to succeed. At the same time, I cannot help writing to remind you that even if we do not sacrifice the whole of our lives to duty, even if we are resolved to keep some corner of it for our pleasure, we need not regard duty as a mere prejudice, without value for those who have gained sufficient strength of mind to take their lives into their own hands. If you will allow me to speak quite candidly, I will tell you that the secretary does not seem to me to correspond with the schoolmistress I once knew. In crossing the Channel she seems to have changed a good deal. There is a likeness between the Irish Rose Leicester and the English, but I like the Irish better. The Irish Rose was not without a sense of duty, of kindness toward others; whereas the English Rose seems bent upon a life of pleasure, intellectual and worldly adventures. She delights in the prospect of foreign travel, and she enjoys the luxury of

living in a well-appointed English country house. She can no longer write of the trees she sees from the library windows when she raises her head from her writing without betraying not only a too exclusive admiration for all that the eye may see, but also her liking of a life of ease and comfort. She places feeling above ideas, and regards our instincts as our sovereign guides. When we find ourselves delighting to this extent in the sensible, we may be sure that our lives have wandered far away from spiritual things. There is ever a divorce between the world of sense and the world of spirit, and the question of how much love we may expend upon external things will always arise, and will always be a cause of perplexity to those who do not choose to abandon themselves to the general drift of sensual life. This question is as difficult as the cognate question of what are our duties toward ourselves and our duties toward others. And your letters raise all these questions. I ponder them in my walks by the lake in the afternoon. In the evening in my house on the hilltop I sit thinking, seeing in imagination the country where I have been born and where I have always lived—the lake winding in and out of headlands, the high road shaded by sycamores at one spot, a little farther on wandering like a gray thread among barren lands, with here and there a village, and I make application of all the suggestions your letters contain to my own case. Every house in Garranard I know, and I see each gable end and each doorway as I sit thinking, and all the faces of my parishioners. I see lights springing up far and near. Wherever there

is a light, there is a poor family. Upon these people I am dependent for my daily bread, and they are dependent upon me for spiritual consolation. I baptize them, I marry them, and I bury them. How they think of me I know not. I suppose they hardly think at all. When they return home at night they have little time for thinking; their bodies are too fatigued with the labor of the fields. But as I sit thinking of them, I regret to say that my fear often is that I shall never see any human beings but them; and I dream of long rambles in the French country, resting at towns, reading in libraries. A voice whispers, 'You could do very well with a little of her life, but you will never know any other life but your present one.' A great bitterness comes up, a little madness gathers behind the eyes; I walk about the room, and then I sit down stunned by the sudden conviction that life is, after all, a very squalid thing—something that I would like to kick like an old hat down a road.

"The conflict going on within me goes on within every man, but without this conflict life would be superficial; we shouldn't know the deeper life. Duty has its rewards as well as its pain, and the knowledge that I am passing through a time of probationship sustains me. I know I shall come out of it all a stronger man. But in addition to the fact that I am passing through a very trying time of life, accident has thrown upon my shoulders an exceptional burden. You see, I was guilty of a great error of judgment. Ah, yes, and this takes me back to the beginning again. I drove you out of the

parish. If it hadn't been for me you never would have known Mr. Ellis, and without wishing to accuse him of deliberately setting himself to destroy your faith, there can be no doubt that you are living in an essentially unchristian atmosphere. I cannot disguise from myself the fact that if you lose your soul God will hold me responsible, and think of what this means to one who still holds by the Christian faith.

"In your letter you defend yourself, using very specious arguments to show that to remain Mr. Ellis's secretary is not beset with danger. I don't know if the arguments are yours or Mr. Ellis's. Possibly they are Mr. Ellis's, and I can imagine him priding himself upon this phrase, 'that though history owes nothing to theology, theology owes a great deal to history.' A neat phrase, but a neat phrase does not settle anything, and the matter in dispute turns on this point: With what intention is the search being conducted? Of course, we hear a great deal about impartial pursuit of knowledge, but is anything impartial in this world? Will Mr. Ellis deny that the upsetting of received opinions is not an incentive to the pursuit of knowledge? Are not received opinions the quarry, and are not jubilant horns sounded when a sudden hound brings the quarry to bay, though the embaying endures but a moment? There is no such thing as an impartial search, perhaps not on our side any more than on yours. You see, I have said on yours. The words came up, and I wrote them without thinking, prompted by my instinct, knowing through it that though to-day you flatter yourself that you are merely acquiring

knowledge without drawing conclusions, the day will come when you will find yourself looking upon all that you once held sacred and divine as the childish efforts of a primitive age to explain the enigma of life. We must either believe or disbelieve. There is no middle state, and the indifference on which you flatter yourself to-day will pass into unbelief. I foresee the day when you will take up your pen to write to me, and lay it down, saying, 'Why should I write? What have I got to write about? Poor man! he is but a survival of the world's childhood.' You will certainly come to think like this if you remain Mr. Ellis's secretary, and you will continue to think like this as long as you have got good health. You are going abroad to visit museums, to read books, to hear music, to meet learned men, but the day will come when these things will cease to interest you. Then religion will come to you, take you by the hand, and lead you all the way back, just as a child is led by its mother."

The room had gradually darkened; he could hardly see what he was writing, and the silence was so intense that it caught his ear, and, going to the window, he longed for something to break it, and was glad when the rain pattered among the leaves. The trees stood stark against the sky; their green was unnatural; they seemed like things that had changed color through fear. The sheep moved toward the sycamores, and from all sides came the lowing of cattle. A flash drove him back from the window. He thought he was blinded. The thunder rattled; it was as if a God had taken the mountains and

was shaking them together. Crash followed crash, the rain came down; it was as if the rivers of heaven had been opened suddenly. Once he thought the storm was over: but the thunder crashed again, the rain began to thicken; there was another flash and another crash, and the pour began again. But all the while the storm was wearing itself out, and he began to wonder if a sullen day, ending in this apocalypse, would pass into a cheerful evening. It seemed as if it would, for a little space of blue had begun to appear between the drifting clouds; veils of vapor were drifting westward, threatening every moment to blot out the blue space, but the clouds continued to brighten at the edges. "The beginning of the sunset," the priest said; and he went out on his lawn and stood watching the swallows in the shining air, their dipping, swerving flight showing against a background of dappled clouds. Never had he known so extraordinary a change, and he walked to and fro in the refreshened air, in the clear and exhilarating evening, thinking that, after all, he had much to be thankful for. Rose was never very strong. Her health would not have lasted trudging from street to street, teaching the piano at two shillings an hour, returning home late at night to a poky little lodging, eating any food a landlady might choose to give her. So perhaps it was as well that she had met Mr. Ellis. She would have had great difficulty in supporting herself and her baby. He was moved to think of her child, and it pleased him to imagine it as very like its mother. No doubt it had fair hair. He would like to see her child if he went to London. She would probably be anxious

about it. And going into the house, he added this paragraph:

"I was interrupted while writing this letter by a sudden darkening of the light, and when I went to the window the sky seemed to have sunk close to the earth, and there was a dreadful silence underneath it. I was driven back by a flash of lightning, and the thunder was terrifying. A most extraordinary storm. When the rain ceased I went out, and it was a pleasure to see the change —the lake mysteriously shrouded in mist, the ducks talking softly in the reeds, and the swallows high up, advancing in groups like dancers on a background of dappled clouds.

"I have come back to add a few more lines to my letter. I feel I have lived too long by this lake's side, and I am thinking of going to London. All you have said about Father O'Grady has interested me very much; I long to make his acquaintance. I suppose it was he who baptized your child. You have never written to me a word on this subject; I do not know if your baby is alive. If I go to London, would you like me to go to see your baby? Father O'Grady and I will go together to see the child, and I will write to you about her. You will be glad, no doubt, to hear that she is going on well.

"Very sincerely yours,

"Oliver Gogarty, P.P."

From Father Oliver Gogarty to Miss Rose Leicester.

"Garranard, Bohola,
"August 16, 19—.

"Forgive me, my dear friend, but I am compelled to write to apologize for the introduction of my troubles of conscience and my anxiety for your spiritual welfare into my last letter. You found a way out of difficulties—difficulties into which I plunged you. But we will say no more on that point; enough has been said. You have created a life for yourself. You have shown yourself to be a strong woman in more ways than one, and are entitled to judge whether your work and the ideas you live among are likely to prove prejudicial to your faith and morals. Only such an exceptional woman as you certainly are would have been able to forgive me; and I have often run over in my mind the mean, sordid little letter, full of hatred, that the ordinary woman would have sent to me, and how falsely she would have represented me to Father O'Grady.

"By a virtue of forgiveness, which I admire and thank you for, you write telling me of the literary work you are engaged upon. If I had thought sufficiently before writing the letter I am now apologizing for, I could not have failed to see that you write to me because you would relieve my loneliness as far as you are able. But I did not think sufficiently: I yielded to my mood. I see now that the letters I send you are disgracefully egotistical, and very often absurd; for do I not beg of you to remember that since God will hold me responsible for your

soul it would be well that you should live a life of virtue and renunciation, in order that I shall be saved the humiliation of looking down from above upon you in hell?

"Loneliness begets sleeplessness, and sleeplessness begets a sort of madness. I suffer from nightmare, and I cannot find words to tell you how terrible are the visions one sees at dawn. It is not so much that one sees unpleasant and ugly things—life is not always pretty or agreeable, that we know—but, when one lies between sleeping and waking, life itself is presented to one in the most horrible and mean aspects, and it is whispered that one has been duped till now; that now, and for the first time, one knows the truth. You know how the wind wails about the hilltop on which I live; I think the constant wail of the wind has something to do with my condition of mind. One cannot sit from eight o'clock in the evening till twelve at night staring at the lamp, hearing the wind, and remain perfectly sane.

"But what is it to you that I suffer from nerves? Perhaps I shall be making amends for these explanations by telling you that I derived great benefit from your letter. And a sentence I had overlooked is the cause of my present happiness. You reminded me in your last letter that we used to talk together of medieval Ireland, about the lake and its castles; you even remembered that, though I had lived near it, I had never visited Church Island. So I resolved to repair at once this extraordinary omission. If there had been a boat here I should have rowed myself through the strait and along the

shores, seeing Castle Carra and Castle Burke as I passed. But Church Island is nearly eight miles from here, and I don't know if I should have been man enough to pull the fisherman's boat so far. His boat is always away at Tinnick, so I put the gray horse into the shafts and went round by road.

"Church Island lies in a bay under a rocky shore. A farmer cuts grass there in the summer-time; he has a boat to bring away the hay, and it was quite a special excitement to get into it, and as the oars chimed I said to myself, 'To-day I shall see where the poet hermit lived,' for I had his poem in my pocket, and I said, 'I will read it walking up the little path leading from his cell to his church.' The lake was like a sheet of blue glass, the sky was paler blue overhead, and the island lay yellow and red in the blue lake. As we passed, seeking a landing place, the smell of the autumn leaves mingled with the freshness of the water. Tall trees grow along its shores, their branches reflected in the lake. Up a beautiful little inlet overhung with bushes we went. The quay is at the end of it.

"On getting out of the boat I asked the boatman to point out to me what remained of Marban's church, and he led me across the island. I was surprised at the size of this. It is the largest in the lake—not less than six or seven acres, and no doubt some parts of it were once cultivated by Marban. But very little remains of his church —only one piece of wall, and we had great difficulty in seeing it, for it is now surrounded by a dense thicket. The little pathway, however, leading from his cell to the

church still exists; it is almost the same as he left it—a little overgrown, that is all.

"Marban was no ordinary hermit; he was a sympathetic naturalist, a true poet, and his brother who came to see him, and whose visit gave rise to the colloquy, was a king. I hope I am not wronging Marban, but the island is so beautiful that I cannot help thinking that he was attracted by its beauty—he went there because he loved Nature as well as God. His poem is full of charming observations of Nature, of birds and beasts and trees, and it proves how very false the general idea is that primitive man had no eyes to see the beauties of the forest and felt no interest in the habits of animals or of birds, but regarded them merely as food. It pleases me to think of the hermit sitting under the walls of his church or by his cell writing the poem which has given me so much pleasure, including in it all the little lives that came to visit him—the birds and the beasts; enumerating them as carefully as Wordsworth would, and loving them as tenderly. Marban! Could one find a more beautiful name for a hermit? Guaire is the brother's name. Marban and King Guaire. Now, imagine the two brothers meeting for a poetic disputation regarding the value of life, and each speaking from his different point of view! True, that Guaire's point of view is only just indicated—he listens to his brother, for a hermit's view of life is more interesting than a king's. It pleases me to think that the day the twain met to discourse of life and its mission was the counterpart of the day I spent on the island. It was full of drifting cloud and sunshine, and the lake lay

like a mirror reflecting the red shadow of the island. It seemed to me that the reasons Marban gave for living there in preference to living the life of the world are valid, and I could not help peering into the bushes, trying to find a rowan tree, for he speaks of one. The rowan is the mountain ash. I found several, one beautiful tree covered with red berries, and I broke off a branch and brought it home, thinking that perchance it might be descended from the one planted by Marban's hand. Of blackthorns there are plenty. The adjective he uses is 'dusky.' Could he have chosen a more appropriate one? I thought, too, of 'the clutch of eggs, the honey and the mast that God sent him, of the sweet apples and red whortleberries, and of his dish of strawberries of good taste and color.'

"It is impossible to give an idea in an English translation of the richness of the verse, heavily rhymed and beautifully alliterated, but you will see that he enumerates the natural objects with skill. The eternal summer—the same in his day as in ours—he speaks of as 'a colored mantle,' and he speaks of 'the fragrance of the woods.' And seeing the crisp leaves, for the summer was waning, I repeated his phrase, 'the summer's colored mantle,' and I remembered that when Guaire reminded his brother that he was without music, Marban answered:

'Swarms of bees and chafers, the little musicians of the world,
A gentle chorus.'

'The wren,' he says, 'is an active songster among the hazel boughs. Beautifully hooded birds, woodpeckers,

fair white birds, herons, seagulls, come to visit me.' There is no mournful music in his island; and as for loneliness, there is no such thing in—

'My lowly little abode, hidden in a mane of green-barked yew tree.
Near is an apple tree,
Big like a hostel;
A pretty bush, thick as a fist of hazelnuts; a choice spring, and water fit for a prince to drink.
Round it tame swine lie down,
Wild swine, grazing deer,
A badger's brood,
A peaceful troop, a heavy host of denizens of the soil
A-trysting at my house.
To meet them foxes come.
How delightful!'

"The island is about a hundred yards from the shore, and I wondered how the animals crossed from the mainland as I sat under the porch of the ruined church. I suppose the water was shallower than it is now. But why and how the foxes came to meet the wild swine is a matter of little moment; suffice it that he lived in this island aware of its loneliness, 'without the din of strife, grateful to the Prince who giveth every good to me in my bower.' And Guaire answered:

'I would give my glorious kingship
With my share of our father's heritage—
To the hour of my death let me forfeit it—
So that I may be in thy company, O Marban.'

"There are many such beautiful poems in early Irish. I know of another, and I'll send it to you one of these

days. In it a monk describes how he and his cat sit together, himself puzzling out some literary or historical problem, the cat thinking of hunting mice, and how the taste of each is difficult and requires much patience.

"Ireland had certainly attained to a high degree of civilization in the seventh and eighth centuries, and if the Danes had not come and interrupted the renaissance—the first of all the renaissances—Ireland might have rivaled Italy. The poems I speak of are more beautiful than any that were written in Europe at that time, whether we search Italy or France or England. I never read poems I like better. I like them much better than the bardic tales, senseless in descriptions of slaughter.

"I write these things to you because I wish you to remember that, when religion is represented as hard and austere, it is the fault of those who administer religion, and not of religion itself. Religion in Ireland in the seventh and eighth centuries was clearly a homely thing, full of tender joy and hope, and the inspiration not only of poems, but of many churches and much ornament of all kinds, illuminated missals, carven porches. If Ireland had been left to herself—if it had not been for the invasion of the Danes, and the still worse invasion of the English—there is no saying what high place she might not have taken in the history of the world. But I am afraid the halcyon light that paused and passed on in those centuries will never return. We have gotten the afterglow, and the past should incite us, and I am much obliged to you for reminding me that the history of the lake and its castles would make an interesting book. I

will try to write this book: I shall look forward to the day when I shall send you a copy of the work, if God gives me strength and patience to complete it. Little is ever completed in Ireland. . . . But I mustn't begin to doubt before I begin the work, and while you and Mr. Ellis are studying dry texts, trying to prove that the things that men have believed and loved for centuries are false, I shall be engaged in writing a sympathetic history—the history of natural things and natural love.

"Very sincerely yours,

"OLIVER GOGARTY, P.P."

IX

From Miss Rose Leicester to Father Oliver Gogarty.

"Hôtel Belvidere, Munich,
"September 2, 19—.

I AM glad my letters interest you; if I didn't think they did, I shouldn't be able to write any more. And that would be a pity, especially now I am traveling. This journey means a great deal to me: it is a thing that may never happen again in my life, and if I don't write down my impressions they will pass away like the clouds. However intense our feelings may be at the time, a few hours obliterate a good deal, and at the end of a fortnight nearly everything but the facts are forgotten. I discovered this yesterday as I sat thinking, trying to remember something that had been said on a balcony overlooking the Rhine. That I could not recollect what Mr. Ellis had said frightened me, not because what he had said was of any importance or of any particular interest, but because my forgetfulness assured me that I had only to wait a little while for everything to become dim. 'Those days in Holland,' I said, 'at present as distinct in my mind as any one of the pictures I admired, will fade away.' I asked myself if I had forgotten our journey from London from the time we left Charing Cross till we got to Norwich, and to my

great disappointment I found that very little remained. Of our journey to the coast I only remembered that I had sat at the window thinking the sunset very beautiful, saying to myself, 'I shall never forget what I am thinking and feeling now.' Everything grew more and more wonderful as we passed into the country, and I became entirely aware of myself. Edith was reading a novel, Mr. Ellis was turning over the pages of the evening paper, and I didn't wish my admiration of the sunset to be interrupted by any word.

"The world has seen many sunsets, but every one is wonderful to him or her whose life is at crisis. And wasn't my life at crisis? Such peaceful shadows, such hallowed lights! My mood was exalted, as well it might be, for was not my dream coming true? Was I not going abroad with Mr. Ellis and his daughter on a journey of art and literature, going to travel through many countries—Holland, Belgium, and Germany—to stop at various cities, to meet distinguished men? My head was filled with thoughts about life and the wonder of life; I should have written down my thoughts—they were worth writing down—but I neglected to do so, and they are gone forever. I might easily have done so when we got on board the boat.

"I told you in a former letter that Mr. Ellis's descriptions of the desert were written in his tent every night before going to sleep. So I might have known that I should forget; but the experience of others teaches us nothing. I lacked courage to separate myself from my companions; a great deal of courage would have been

required to have gone down into a stuffy cabin to take notes. For the evening was beautiful and calm, and I wanted to admire the eastern coast, its low sand dunes running into headlands, and the sea spreading to the horizon pale and gray, and so still that I had to compare it to the floor of a ballroom; the stars were like candles, and the moon like a great lamp. Presently a little mist gathered on the water, and no sound was heard except the churning of the paddle wheels. I feared seasickness, for Edith had told me how ill she once was crossing from Calais to Dover; but there was no danger of seasickness, and we stood looking over the bulwarks seeing the white track of the vessel disappearing behind us. We heard the captain cry 'Starboard!' to the helmsman, and the ship veered a little.

"Edith and I lay down on a bench, and Mr. Ellis came up from the cabin with rugs and tucked them about us. He was very kind. We slept a little, but my sleep was lighter than Edith's, and in a couple of hours I got up without waking her. The vessel excited my curiosity, and I wandered about, vaguely interested in the sailors, trying to think, unable to do so, for my mind was tired, and refused to receive any further impressions. That was the time I should have gone down to the cabin to write; but Mr. Ellis came by, and we stood leaning over the bulwarks. There are times when he will not talk at all, and one wonders what he is thinking about. I tried to speak to him about his book, but he didn't seem in the humor to talk about it. So I went back and lay down beside Edith. She was sleeping deeply: but I couldn't

sleep at all, and after awhile I got up. This time it seemed as if we were close to the land; and so numerous were the lights on our starboard bow that I thought we were passing by some town. Mr. Ellis said he thought they were the lights of a fleet of fishing boats. He asked one of the sailors, but he couldn't make him understand, for the sailor was a Hollander. I begged Mr. Ellis, who speaks a little Dutch, to try to make him understand. I wanted to hear the strange language; for it would make me feel I was going to countries where English wasn't spoken, and where everybody thought differently from what they do in England and in Ireland.

"The conversation between Mr. Ellis and the Hollander didn't seem to progress toward information regarding the lights on the starboard bow, and during the whole of it we did not seem to get away from them. I suppose Mr. Ellis must have misunderstood the sailor, or the sailor must have misunderstood him; we must have been steaming all the while along the shore. And this might well have been the case, for Holland is only a few feet above the level of the sea. Later on we learnt—this time from an English sailor—that we were off the coast, and were steaming at half-speed on account of the mist. The fog horn sounded continuously; the ship's course was changed many times. It appears that the navigation of this coast is very difficult. The entrance to the harbor loomed up suddenly, and we admired the way in which the vessel was steered. I am sorry I didn't take a few notes, for the scene was very impressive. All I can remember of it now is that the

vessel veered many times, and that the day broke slowly. Of course the vessel veered, and of course the day broke slowly, and the dawn is silent and melancholy as a shroud; everyone knows that. But there is much else—how the light changes, and the town emerges out of shadow. One should write down one's impressions at once, as Mr. Ellis did.

"The journey from Flushing to The Hague is only a little way; and what shall I tell you about The Hague? I only remember one thing clearly—a portrait by Rubens; I half remember a portrait by Vandyke. These two portraits have been hung together, side by side, no doubt with a view to enabling the visitor to see the two painters in all their qualities. Vandyke was Rubens's pupil, and at first sight Vandyke's portrait seems the better; for it is more natural, more like a photograph, and I said: 'I like the Vandyke best.' Mr. Ellis said: 'Do you know, I think I do, too;' but as we stood looking at the pictures I saw he was beginning to regret his words, and as the thought passed through my mind he said: 'We have said a very stupid thing. The reason why we preferred the Vandyke is because the smaller mind always attracts us first. Look at them. How much nobler is the Rubens! Vandyke's mind was that of a lackey. Rubens's mind was more lordly than any lord's, unless that lord were Shakespeare.'

"And no sooner had he spoken than I began to realize the nobility of Rubens's mind. The women Rubens chose to paint are what are known as fat women, and therefore to many Rubens is a vulgar painter. But a

loftier vision was never bestowed on man. Rubens's women are beautiful, but they are not what the man in the street regards as a pretty woman. They are his own women, and they are women—not creatures without beards or mustaches. And he praises us all the while in his own benign fashion. Painters are never more sympathetic than when they are praising women, for man's thoughts about woman are perhaps his most intimate thoughts, and spring from the very depths of his nature.

"We stood looking at this picture for a long time, and we returned to it many times, and every moment I seemed to see more and more clearly that this was the type of woman that corresponded to Rubens's inward vision. Great men bring a vision into the world with them; they are not distracted by passing things like inferior men; and large, fair women, fair as roses, with pale gold hair and blue eyes and white curved hands—Rubens liked curved hands and almond nails, rose-colored—were the symbols through which his mind found continual expression. I feel sure that if his model had been a thin, dark woman, as she must sometimes have been, he would have gradually transformed her till she corresponded in some measure with his idea: it could not be otherwise, for Rubens wasn't a photographer.

"Looking at the picture, seeing nothing but a large, fair woman, fair as a tea rose, the superficial will say, 'a gross sensualist'; but the great man always presents his work in a form which deceives the public, and underlying the voluptuous exterior there is a sadness in

Rubens which only the attentive mind perceives. I tried to get Mr. Ellis to talk about this picture in the train, and he told me the picture was a portrait of Helena Fourment, Rubens's second wife, a girl whom he had married late in life, many years after the death of Isabelle Brandes. Mr. Ellis thinks he was drawn to her by the likeness she presents to his first wife. That was all he would say. He lapsed into silence; I couldn't get another word from him, and we were close to Amsterdam when he took out his pocketbook. After writing these verses, he handed them to me:

'Pleine de grâce et de pâleur
Elle vit ainsi qu'une fleur,
Évoquant une fraiche odeur
Par la transparente couleur.

'Néanmoins pour toute âme humaine,
Sa vie inconsciente et saine
Est bien l'apparence certaine
De la vie éphémère et vaine.'

"You will wonder why Mr. Ellis should write French poetry instead of English. I asked him, and he told me that to write mediocre English poetry is unpardonable, whereas he who loves verse and is not a great poet may write in French, just as a nobleman may indulge in private theatricals, but should refrain from the public stage.

"'French poetry is a pretty way of passing the time in the train,' he said.

"'A pretty way for you,' I answered, 'but not a

pretty way for your companion; for I am really tired of studying drainage.'

"At first he did not understand, and I added, 'Look out.' We were passing through flat fields intersected with many drains, not the little drains that one sees in Ireland, but great deep drains representing extraordinary industry and perseverance.

"'These drains,' I said, 'must have taken weeks and months to dig, and must give the farmers a great deal of trouble to keep free from weed. I should go mad if I were to live here. I like hill and dale. Just fancy walking for miles and never seeing a valley or a hilltop!'

"'Holland is a swamp,' he answered; and at that moment we passed a field flat as a billiard table with six drains in it, and this field was followed by another with six more drains. But the Dutch painters, every one but *two*, seem to have loved their country. Every one seems to have rejoiced in his country's platitude, topographical and domestic; so far as I remember, all the pictures we saw are about eating and drinking, especially drinking: coarse tavern revels, servant girls dancing, and the like. Only two painters seem to have escaped the influence of their surroundings: Rembrandt and Ruysdael. Rembrandt I shall admire some other time; this time I had very little thought for anyone but Ruysdael. We saw two pictures by him in Amsterdam. One of them I shall never forget: a wild hillside, unreclaimed and unreclaimable nature; only a woodman dwells there. Some poor fellow, half man, half beast, has built himself a sheiling among the rocks. The roof shows against a gray sky

deeper and soberer than any Irish sky—a real Protestant sky. Ruysdael must have been a Protestant. His pictures are even Calvinistic, or perhaps I should be nearer the truth if I said he was a great pessimist, attached to no particular doctrine. He reminds Mr. Ellis more of Spinoza than of Milton. I have not yet begun to read Spinoza, but I have read a little of 'Paradise Lost,' and it never interested me at all, whereas Ruysdael interested me. I seem to have known him in some previous existence, so clear is my conception of this moody man, whom I see wandering by himself in lonely places, in sparsely populated districts, sometimes miles and miles away from human habitation, speaking to no one except, perhaps, a charcoal burner, in whose hut he lies down at night. At daybreak I see him wandering away by himself, continually making drawings. But where did he find the scenes he painted? Not in Holland, surely. There are no waterfalls nor mountains in Holland, nor, so far as I know, a forest; not a single rough wood did we see. He must have gone to Norway to paint.

"It appears that nothing is known about him except the dates of his birth and death. Berghem and Dujardin painted figures into his pictures, so he must have been the friend of these painters, and I can imagine his face lighting up when he saw them. I can imagine their talks; sometimes their talk was pleasant, and anecdotes were told or hinted at, but no one could have dared to speak very openly of light things in Ruysdael's presence. But what I can imagine most distinctly of all is his good-by. When he bade them good-by his original nature, for-

gotten for a time, returned to him, a sadness came into his voice. I am sure his good-by was a sad one; I am sure it resembled an amen. 'So be it, so much life is over and done with.'

"I said just now that he probably went to Norway to paint. However this may be, he seems to have disliked the Dutch country as much as I do. But if I disliked the Dutch country as much as he, I love the Dutch towns as much as any one of the painters, not excepting Van de Meer, who, I feel, must have loved them very much. I remember one street, just the street that Van de Meer's studio window should have looked out on. Edith and I used to sit there on a bench watching the pretty morning sunlight, and the little breezes lifting the foliage of the trees. It was a broad street, and, I need not say, it was level. You must remember that everything is level in Holland. The houses are low, and they have nice shutters and doorways; and what makes the street so attractive are the dog carts. Carts drawn by dogs were always going by, and wagons drawn by oxen. Life seems more docile and quiet in Holland than elsewhere, and for this reason I like Holland, and I think I shall always remember this street. The great Professor —— lives in a little house at the end of it, with one servant, and when we went to see him I watched her peeling onions in the courtyard, and I thought of the pictures we had seen in the galleries. Professor —— is a nice old man, short and fat, and he wore a red dressing gown. His furniture was the same as one sees in hotels—sofas and chairs covered with plush, and everywhere

there were books and manuscripts. I think there were more reviews than newspapers. I don't think I ever saw so many reviews; every corner was filled with them. He and Mr. Ellis talked in French, so it was difficult for me to follow the conversation. I heard, however, the names of my good friends, Jeremiah and Hosea and Amos. Esdras came in for a good deal of criticism, that I know, for Mr. Ellis dictated to me the professor's views on the worthy Esdras, and these views, it appears, are most important.

"When we got out of the house he explained to me what these views were. But I have got so much else to tell you that we will omit Esdras from this letter. I might very well omit the mention of the two pictures that hung on the professor's walls, but they interested me, so I will tell you that they were two portraits painted by Angelica Kauffmann. Now, I wonder how these two portraits of pretty women ever found their way into the professor's house? Did the professor ever care for pretty women, I wonder? And I suppose I shall go on wondering, for my curiosity on this point is not likely to be satisfied.

"From Amsterdam we went to Haarlem to see Hals's pictures, and we saw some six or seven, each thirty feet long by twenty feet high. Burgomasters in profile, burgomasters in full face, burgomasters in three-quarter face. There are about thirty in each picture, and that would make 180 heads, 360 hands—well, perhaps not quite so many, perhaps all the hands are not shown. I cannot tell you how many faultlessly painted swordhilts and scarfs

these pictures contain; but faultless painting wearies one. Everything is so perfect that the pictures lack humanity. They seem a little mechanical. Mr. Ellis calls Hals the *maître d'armes* of painting, and I do not think the comparison is unappropriate. He is the undefeated *maître d'armes,* he whose wrist never slackens, over whose guard a thrust never comes. This is Mr. Ellis's picturesque way of expressing himself. I think a somewhat plainer comparison would help you to understand why I don't seem to like these pictures. I cannot admire thirty heads all a-row. Pictures of this kind reminded me too much of the inside of omnibuses. But his picture of the old women, a picture painted when he was eighty, is quite different. It is full of emotion and beauty. Hals seems to have grown tender and sentimental in his old age, or was it that he merely painted these old women to please himself, whereas he painted the burgomasters at so much a head? There is no suspicion of the omnibus in the picture of the old women. He saw them together in the almshouse; they made a group, a harmony, and he was moved by the spectacle of the poor old women, fading like flowers, having only a few years to live—old women in their last shelter, an almshouse. He was at that time as old as any of his sitters, and the picture of the old men which he began immediately after was never finished. I suppose that one morning he felt unable to paint; he grew fainter and died.

"When one has seen Hals there is nothing else to see in Haarlem. One walks about until the train comes to take one away. That I did not take a note of the

weariness I experienced during one dusty afternoon is not a matter for regret. I recollect the afternoon sufficiently well—the walk along the dusty roads by little woods dusty as the roads, and the tea we had at a very uncomfortable hotel in a barren room. There seemed to be no one in the hotel except the proprietor, and he cheated us, charging two shillings for a cup of tea, which made Mr. Ellis very angry. The railways in Holland are small, or they seem small, and the miserable Dutch landscape irritated me. Hour after hour I sat looking at flat fields. Sometimes I counted the number of drains in each field. I don't know what the others did; they sat in the corner of the carriage. We had been together since early morning, and were a little tired of each other. I don't think any of us had anything to say. You can hardly believe that I had nothing to say. Well, believe it or not, as you like, but I didn't speak a word, and when I don't speak I always feel cross.

"We left Haarlem by the four o'clock train, and I felt grateful when night came and blotted the landscape out. The train seemed as if it were going to wriggle on forever; it wriggled into and out of many a little station, and we were so hot in our first-class carriage that we got into a third. The change was a pleasant one. After a time some yokels got in, and they reminded us of the pictures we had seen. But one can't go on considering yokels forever, and at last, unable to contain myself, I said:

"'Now, what are you thinking of, Mr. Ellis? Do you know you haven't spoken to me for two hours? Are you composing a new French poem?'

"'Well, no; not exactly. But the rhymes in the second stanza of the little poem I composed in the train coming from The Hague are all adjectival, and in French verse adjectives should rhyme as much as possible with verbs and substantives.'

"'Do you think you have improved it?'

"'Yes, I think I have. I'll write out the new version.'

"And with the gold pencil that always hangs on his chain he wrote:

'Dans sa gracieuse pâleur
Elle vit ainsi qu'une fleur,
Évoquant une fraiche odeur
Par la transparente couleur.

'Loin de l'Émotion charnelle
Rubens, oubliant son modèle,
Pressentit la vie éternelle
Qui s'encarne un moment en elle.

'Sa pensée est dans cette main,
Dans sa pose et dans son dessin
Et dans ses yeux pleins du chemin
Que traverse le cœur humain.

'Néanmoins pour tout âme en peine
Que son calme altier rassérène,
Elle est l'image souveraine
De la vie éphémère et vaine.'

"Next day we went to the cathedral, but we were so conscious of our obligation to admire, and of the gravity of our visit, that we experienced a sense of our unworthiness when we first saw the pictures of the Crucifixion. We wandered from one to the other a little

disconsolate, shocked to find that they did not seem to us nearly as intense as we had expected. We were glad to get away from both, and we found the 'Coronation of the Virgin,' which, we were told, had been repainted, much more to our taste. But Mr. Ellis does not believe in the story of the repainting, and, while we stood looking at the 'Ascent of the Cross,' he told us that the greatest art critic that ever lived preferred the 'Ascent' to the 'Descent.' We wondered at his preference, and tried to find a reason for it. It could not be because the painting of the 'Ascent' seemed to him better than the first. The painting is obviously the same; the pictures differ in conception rather than in execution. Whereas the 'Descent' is restrained and correct in drawing even to the point of a suspicion of pedantry, the 'Ascent' is tumultuous in composition, and so deliberately reckless that the scene fails to impress. The Middle Ages represented the scene on Calvary with great realism, but the realism of the Middle Ages was sincere and childlike, quite unlike the calculated realism of Rubens—one might almost say purposeful realism; and the thought came by, whispering in our ears, that the explanation of the difference between the pictures is that Rubens had begun to weary of the echoes of Greece heard in Italy, and that the second picture is his first attempt to return to the primitive art of his own country, to the ages of faith, to the fifteenth century, which in the low country was the equivalent to the fourteenth century in Italy.

"I am quoting, of course, from Mr. Ellis, but I only quote so far as what he says interests me. I have not

been to Italy, and know nothing of Italian art except the pictures I saw in Amsterdam, but I think I understand and feel quite clearly that Mr. Ellis is right when he says that Titian never designed a more beautiful young man than the one who slips, in all the pallor and beauty of death, down the white sheet into the hands of devoted women. The Renaissance made Christ beautiful. It transformed the medieval Victim into a beautiful youth who preached in Galilee, and captivated the imaginations of many holy men and women; but this Hellenization of Christ—for it is that and nothing else, the intention being to draw our attention to bodily perfection rather than to show us a suffering Redeemer—is, so says Mr. Ellis, a mistake not only from a religious point of view, but also from a dramatic. For, after all, sincerity counts for a great deal in our enjoyment, and who can say that Rubens is sincere when he is painting a crucifixion? All the while he is trying to escape from his subject; and I'm not nearly sure but he would have been a greater painter if he had never painted Helena Fourment as anything but the mother of his children, or a nymph amid a group of satyrs and fauns, the demi-animality of the vales of Thessaly. As Mr. Ellis said yesterday, supposing the gentle monk of Fiesole had been forced to depict a woodland revel, with Silenus carried by, drunken, with vine leaves in his hair, he would certainly have failed to convey any conceivable idea of the mythology of the woods. We shall never know whether Christ was a beautiful youth who preached about Galilee, or an emaciated ascetic. Very likely He was one and the other at different times

of His life. Be this as it may, the pictures in which He is represented at Cologne carry more conviction than those of Antwerp—the bleeding emaciated Victim is more in the spirit of Christianity. This we can say for certain, that the desire of the Cologne painters was not to escape from the subject, but to approach it and identify themselves with it.

"My dear Father Gogarty, you must forgive my simplicity of expression. You complained of it in a former letter, and I have been puzzling ever since to know what you meant. So long as I do not say anything against faith and morals, may I not express myself fully and clearly? Is it not true that the Middle Ages are always considered the ages of faith? and is it not true that the Middle-Age representations of Christ are not so lovely as the Renaissance? Will you be shocked if I ask you how it is that the bleeding Victim has been better worshiped than the beautiful young man? And is it wrong for me to ask you why it is that faith goes out of the window when beauty comes in at the door?

"I am afraid you will consider this last remark unseemly, but you will forgive me nevertheless. And so that I may not offend your religious sense again, I will tell you no more about pictures. To be quite truthful, I am a little tired of pictures; we have seen too many, and I was glad to get away from Cologne and to stop at little towns on the Rhine, where there are no pictures—only parks and pleasure grounds, with walks winding through woods. In these woods one comes across temples and statues. The features of the nymphs and the fauns

are weatherworn, hardly distinguishable, and I think I like statues better when the hand of man is not apparent upon the stone. We lost ourselves in one of these parks, and were very much afraid we should be captured as trespassers; but we got out without being perceived, across a little wall, and an hour later we were seated on a balcony overlooking the river. A ferryboat moved backward and forward in the dusk, across the slow current. There is something mysterious in a river; not in a babbling river, but in a slow-flowing river. And the Rhine reminds one of Time. How many thousand years has the Rhine flowed! Just as it flowed the day we were at Bopart it was flowing when *Wotan* was God, and there were nymphs in the Rhine watching the gold, the innocent gold, that *Alberich* stole from them and converted into money. One night we sat on a balcony drinking Rhine wine, talking of *Siegfried* and his joyous horn. It is worth one's while to live in Germany for the sake of the wine, and I'm sure the wine we drank that night was the same as the wine in the goblet out of which *Siegfried* drank forgetfulness of *Brunehild*. That dinner I shall never forget. We sat leaning over the dining table watching the Rhine, hearing the Rhine; and when the waiter brought candles and put them upon our table we didn't get up, but we talked on about the various legends, and how they were woven together. Mr. Ellis was the talker, and his narrative was intermingled with anecdotes about the unhappy life of the great man who had woven these stories into drama, and would have written them in words if he had been Shakespeare; but, fortunately, he was

not, for the world doesn't want two Shakespeares. Nature, as Mr. Ellis says, took pity upon men; and he made up this little parable on the spot: A good fairy was hiding among the flowers in a garden, probably in a lily cup; and when no one was about, she came into a room where a child was sleeping, and she said, 'Thou shalt weave world stories into dramas as beautiful as any man has ever heard.' But there was a bad fairy up the chimney who heard the blessing, and, when the good fairy went away, she came down and said, 'I cannot take away my sister's gifts. Thou shalt conceive great dramas, but thou shalt not have the power to write them.'

"On that the bad fairy went up the chimney, thinking she had done a very clever thing. But the good fairy, who hadn't yet fallen asleep in the cup of a great lily growing by the window sill, came into the room again, and looked sorrowfully at the cradle, for she knew not how to redeem the child from the curse that had been placed upon him. Suddenly an idea occurred to her. 'I can't take off the curse that has been placed upon thee,' she said. 'Never shalt thou write thy dramas in words, but I will give thee music to write them with.' . . . And that child was Richard Wagner.

"There was a piano in the room behind the balcony. We went to it. Mr. Ellis plays intelligently. As he puts it himself, he plays sufficiently well to give us a foretaste of the music we were on our way to hear. He played on, sketching for us the most salient things in 'The Ring.' There was something in that night I shall never meet again. On the morrow we hastened away. We were still

far from Bayreuth. We stopped at —— to admire the cathedral, and then we started off again. This stage was the last on our journey, for we got a train at Nuremberg, and Bayreuth is but a couple of hours from Nuremberg, and about three hours from Munich. We heard 'The Ring' at Bayreuth, and we shall hear it again at Munich. It will be as well done at Munich, but I feel sure it will not be the same thing. To hear Wagner you must hear him where he chose to be heard, and he knew that one could not hear the 'Dusk of the Gods,' for instance, amid the distractions of a city. One has to leave all things and to follow him to Bayreuth.

"The town is full of the florid architecture of the eighteenth century, pillared façades and balconies, and the old streets are paved with the original cobblestones. Millions of feet will pass, bruised and aching, but the cobblestones shall never pass away, and they hurt one's feet terribly. When the midday sun shines they burn through the leather sole. Nevertheless, I would not have these old streets torn up and paved in asphalt or wood. The cobblestones are part of the entertainment. They remind one that one has to suffer for the master's sake. And these streets lead from open space to open space, by red-brick palaces in which dukes once lived. Germany is full of palaces, nearly all of which are empty. One can obtain permission to walk through the rooms, but I don't think that one derives any special benefit from these walks. The pictures are bad and the furniture is clumsy. There is one thing, however, extraordinarily beautiful in Bayreuth, and, like everything else in Bay-

reuth, it seems an intrinsic part of an appreciation of Wagner. It is the Court Theater, built for the pleasure of some landgrave, a German prince or duke. I do not know if landgraves existed in the eighteenth century. There is one in 'Tannhäuser.' 'Tannhäuser' is tenth century; but if a landgrave existed in the eighteenth, I should have liked to have seen him coming to hear a performance in this beautiful theater. Trumpeters would stand on either side on balconies to announce his arrival, and all his little court would be sitting about him in the boxes and the stalls. It would be so different from Wagner—every man would wear a sword, and the women would wear brocade and long pointed stays, elaborately stitched.

"The opera I should like to see performed in this theater would be Gluck's 'Orfeo,' for instance, or perhaps 'Armide,' for Wagner himself rearranged the overture, or did something to this opera. However, he didn't take the theater and try to convert it to his purpose, as a lesser man would have done; he admired it, and a great man does not destroy the beautiful works of others in order to make way for his own works.

"Wagner built his theater in the woods, some one added a restaurant—maybe it was himself who built it, for, though he wished the people to come from a distance to hear his operas, he wished them to hear in comfort, and one cannot listen in comfort without food. It is possible to spend the day by the theater, walking in the woods, dining between the acts. An undulating country surrounds the hilltop, and when the sun strikes

a distant town, the disputants forget their argument, and eyes rejoice in the effect of light. Seeing a peasant driving his plow, one ceases to discuss 'The Valkyrie,' and one wonders which is right—the man who drives his plow, or one's self, who has traveled to hear 'The Ring,' knowing it to be the greatest musical work the world has ever known. I said to Mr. Ellis a week ago, as we toiled up a steep part in the woods—fir trees stood about us in solemn rows; we had reached the middle of the woods—I said: 'But he wrote these things because he was a great genius, and knew nothing of our pains and woes—he stood aside, and would not know them. He wrote about love, but he never stooped to such triviality as woman's love. He knew all about it. It was all in his brain, but he never loved.'

"'You are mistaken,' Mr. Ellis answered. 'He loved more deeply, and suffered more than any other man, and there will be just time to tell you the story before we get back to the theater.'

"And as we retraced our steps, walking hastily, for the third act of 'The Valkyrie' was about to begin, Mr. Ellis told me of the woman who inspired 'Tristan.' I listened breathless, and when the story was finished I said:

"'Then nothing is wanting. For once Nature filled up the cup.'

"Can I tell you of my expectation to hear this opera, written out of the man's own flesh and blood? And when the second act was over I said to Mr. Ellis: 'It is the man himself. He wrote like this not because he was less human than ourselves, but because he was more human,

more capable of suffering.' Mr. Ellis agreed with me in this, saying that, having experienced more intense emotions than anyone else. Wagner was able to distill a magical juice out of them, which sinks into the flesh, enters the very current of the blood, transforms, disintegrates, and produces a sort of syncope. And this is just it. One loses all power of will listening to this music, and the joy of it is an abdication of self. Yet it was written as an assertion of self; it is an extraordinary spasm of self-consciousness. I said just now that 'The Ring,' to be appreciated, must be heard in the condition that Wagner wished it to be heard in at Bayreuth. But that is not so with 'Tristan.' One can hear it very well in Munich—quite as well as at Bayreuth. It is a work suited to the city, full of the emotions of the city.

"To go to Munich we had to go through Nuremberg, but the journey through Bavaria does not bore one like the journey from Cologne. The railway from Cologne passes through long fields, or, I should say, stretches of country where there are no hedges, and in these fields one sees peasants cutting corn hundreds of yards apart. They seemed very lonely, and I thought how they must suffer from the heat, for there is no hedge where they can lie under. The only variation in the landscape are the pine forests. Pines are very nice among other trees, they are a variety; but imagine if you can the weariness of seeing mile after mile of pine stems, and overhead a cloudless sky. There is no underwood; nothing grows under pines, and the ground is brown, covered with spiky things that the pine sheds. A

circle of shadow gathers round the roots of the pine at midday, and as the sun sets the shadows trickle out. That is all. A rabbit is a pretty thing when one sees one, but when one sees a thousand one gets to hate them. So it is with pines. . . . Bavaria is quite different from the rest of Germany. The landscape takes beautiful shapes, and the shapes of the ground are different from anything one sees in England. Trees climb up the hillsides in the quaintest way possible, and there are plenty of villages at the foot of the hills. There are villages all the way to Munich, and they seem as if they had been built many hundred years ago. The only thing I don't like about Bavaria is its capital town. Munich is white and ugly, and very hot. There is a river, it is true, but not an interesting river. I prefer the brook that flows through Bayreuth; that brook is brown and pretty, and there are trees about it. But there are only white, ugly buildings about the Munich river, and the color of the water is unpleasant. It is green, and I hate green water. I was told that melted snow makes green water, and this may or may not be true. Everything in Munich is unpleasant except the music. The picture gallery is most unpleasant. It is full of little side galleries. One is always popping in and out to see something, and in this way one gets tired and loathes pictures. All picture galleries are too long, and I have come to the conclusion that, however beautiful the pictures may be, no gallery ought to exceed a couple of miles.

"We came here not only to hear 'Tristan,' but to hear Mozart, and last night we all went to hear 'The

Marriage of Figaro.' I knew nothing of Mozart except his religious music—that little Mass for four voices which I used to play in church and an *Agnus Dei.* Do you remember them? The first act of 'The Marriage of Figaro' is the most beautiful and enchanting ever written. Dear little *Cherubino!* how pretty he was behind the armchair, and how exhilarating *Figaro's* song telling him he must go to the war and be a soldier!

"We met a young Frenchman, Émile Canton, at Bayreuth, and he has come on here with us. He, too, is an exegetist, and he is a musician. So far as my experience goes, I am beginning to think that the Bible and music are inseparable. He is quite a young man, not more than thirty—a plump, good-looking Frenchman, with clear eyes, a clear skin, and a nice mustache. He is a good talker, and he is going on to Switzerland with us. We shall see another professor there, for Mr. Ellis and M. Émile Canton are going to found a review together, and the object of our journey is to try to persuade the Swiss professor to write for the review. The conversation will be in French, and I am glad of this; I want practice, for I am determined to learn French. I want to understand Canton's ideas about Esdras and Jeremiah. It is extraordinary how real Jeremiah is to these people. He was hardly more than a name to me two months ago, and now I am beginning to feel quite interested in him. And it is well that I can take an interest in him, for if I didn't I am afraid I should hardly keep my wits. Perhaps Nature, who foresaw my destiny, endowed me with a capacity for taking an interest in

almost anything. Mr. Ellis said that he never knew a more appreciative person. It is well that I am appreciative, for if I were not it would be impossible for me to remain his secretary. . . .

"I had to put this letter aside—Mr. Ellis called me to do some work for him—and, coming back to it, I am astonished at the number of pages I have written; but it is too late to regret my garrulousness. Now, I wish you would come out here and join us. This long letter, describing my pleasure in foreign travel, was written partly in the hopes of tempting you out of Garranard. You say that you have been longing for a holiday, and that you require one. Why not take a real holiday and come out here? You will find Mr. Ellis a very interesting man. You and he will not agree on all subjects, that is true, but I don't think that a certain difference of opinion makes any difference. You are both clever men, and clever men are always interested in each other, however different their views may be. Will you be advised by me, dear Father Gogarty? Come out here and take your holiday with us. One cannot take a holiday in one's own country; one must go abroad. I have told Mr. Ellis about you, and he is very interested, and will be delighted to see you. You have never been out of Ireland in your life, and you want to see Italy. Perhaps it would suit you as well to go straight to Rome. We shall be going there, and it will be interesting to meet in Rome.

"Very sincerely yours,

"Rose Leicester."

X

From Father Oliver Gogarty to Miss Rose Leicester.

"Garranard, Bohola,
"September 6, 19—.

"Dear Miss Leicester:

YOUR letter received this morning has been read and read again; but I remain plunged in perplexity, unable to make up my mind as to what your object might be in sending it to me. You do not, I take it, expect me to write you a letter of equal length, discussing all the points you raise in your appreciations of the arts of Rubens and Wagner. Garranard is a dull, peaceful place, with plenty of leisure, but hardly sufficient leisure for such a lengthy correspondence as your letter suggests. Even you feel some explanation necessary, for you tell me that your object in writing is to preserve some memory of your educational journey through Europe with Mr. Ellis. Well, a letter writer must have a correspondent, but how curiously you have chosen yours! I am, as you well know, not in a position to discuss the matters of which your letter treats; if I were, it would be difficult for me to discuss matters with you, knowing as I do that your knowledge is second hand, and only just acquired. I will admit that the music you have heard may have inspired you. You are capable

of thinking for yourself in musical matters; but what do you know of the art of painting? Had you chosen another correspondent he might have accepted your appreciations of Ruysdael and Rubens as your own, for they are well written, and you seem to have assimilated, in a way, Mr. Ellis's opinions. But the assimilation is more apparent than real. Sometimes you have to fall back upon Mr. Ellis's very words.

"Now, why should you be at such pains to write me Mr. Ellis's views regarding the 'Ascent' and the 'Descent of the Cross' unless, indeed, he dominates your mind so thoroughly that you cannot get him out of your mind? While reading your letter, I seemed to see you following him about, listening, hanging on to his every word; and this much credit I must give you: you seem to have reported him very well indeed. I must compliment you upon your excellent memory; a shorthand reporter would not have represented him better, possibly not so well. You seem to have sifted what he said, and produced a fine essence, which, I confess, I found interesting.

"So far so good. But what was your object in writing at this length to me? Am I really to believe that you wrote with a view to recording your impressions? If this be so, the best thing I can do is to return you your letter. . . . I send it back by this post, and I engage to send back any other documents of the same kind that you may send me, it being clear to me that my business is merely to read, to approve, and to return. Were I to destroy your letter there would be no record. You

would have wasted your time. Nothing would have been accomplished except the astonishment of a Connaught priest, the proving to him that you are making great progress toward a cultured comprehension of the Renaissance. But mere vanity would not have sufficed to induce you to undertake the labor of writing at such a length. There is another motive. Indeed, you admit as much. You say that one of your reasons for writing me this letter is to put before me the pleasures that await me if I can be beguiled from Garranard. You wish to meet me in Rome. This request plunges me again into all my former perplexities. Why should you wish to meet me in Rome? How can my presence add to your pleasure? You are clearly enjoying every moment of your life. My presence could only prove a detriment, an obstacle, unless, perhaps, your unselfishness is such that you are willing to sacrifice your pleasure for the sake of my education. I grant you that to walk behind Mr. Ellis and to listen to every remark that may fall from his lips, whether he be speaking of Michael Angelo or Raphael or the architecture of St. Peter's, would be a privilege that could not be overestimated. Your object in asking me to meet you in Rome cannot be because you think that anything I might say would be of the slightest interest to so superior a person as Mr. Ellis.

"I said in a former letter that perhaps you wrote to me with a view to relieving the tedium of my life in Garranard, and perhaps this is one of the reasons that inspired your last letter. If so, I think it might have

been more judiciously worded, for not the least odd are the passages in which you speak with marked irreverence of our Divine Lord and Redeemer. If a desire to please me formed any part of your motive in writing this letter, you would have avoided saying things which you knew would wound me in my most intimate feelings. But no; you seem to go out of your way to say things which you know must shock me—indeed, you admit as much. You refer to a letter in which I reproved the license of your speech. Nevertheless, you go on to speak with still further irreverence of Him whom you know I hold as Divine. The only interpretation I can put upon your manner of writing is that you are unable to restrain yourself from writing anything that amuses you for the moment. I am willing to think that you are unable to restrain your incurable levity of mind. If this excuse were not available, it would be impossible for me, as a priest, to reply to your letter. The passages I refer to were written, more or less unconsciously, in obedience to an impulse to be witty, to be sprightly, but I cannot help thinking that if you had really wished me to meet you in Rome you would have written me a different letter. However this may be, the result would be the same. I cannot leave Garranard this year, however much I stand in need of a holiday, and I stand in great need of one. But I shall not leave Garranard, certainly not for a long while. And my reasons for remaining here will not appeal to you; they are entirely conscientious. I am passing through a difficult period. There is no reason why I should disguise this fact from

you, or from anyone. There are times in every life when life seems a burden. Even my sister sometimes wearies of her convent, and no one ever had a more distinct religious vocation than she; but, for all that, she would not leave it. I must wait till my present mood has passed before I go abroad. If I left Garranard now I might never have courage to come back. The best way not to fall into temptation is not to put yourself in the way of it, for the flesh is always weak. I might grow interested in what you call ideas; I might linger abroad until it was no longer possible for me to return, and then, what a scandal would arise if I remained away! Think of the shame I should cause my poor people! They would be pained to find that the priest they had looked up to was unworthy of the confidence they had placed in him. There are material reasons, also, which will appeal to you. I have accepted, and I still accept, the money of these poor folk. You will say that I can gain my living elsewhere—in London. You gained your living in London, and it would be disgraceful if I could not succeed where you succeeded; but that has nothing to do with what I am thinking now. I entered the priesthood of my own free will; I chose a path, and I shall follow it through life till the end. I have not ceased to believe in my vocation. I am as convinced of it as I ever was, more than I ever was; for were it not the most real thing in me I should have gone away for a holiday long ago, and left it to chance whether I should ever return to Garranard. This mood of discontent, which I do not hesitate to admit, which has

its origin, perhaps, in the great error of judgment I committed when I spoke about you in church, will pass away. As I said in a previous letter, I have only got to bear my discontent for a while, and I shall come out at the other side a stronger and a better man.

"Sincerely yours,

"OLIVER GOGARTY."

XI

AFTER posting his letter he walked home, congratulating himself that he had made it plain to her that he was not a man she could dupe. She had written that long letter in order to annoy him, and the more he thought of her letter the more plain did it seem that it had been inspired by Ellis. But what could Ellis's reason be for wishing—well, to make a guy of him? Was he jealous of him? There was a moment's satisfaction in the thought, but it could not be entertained. Ellis might wish to make a guy of him, but what was her reason? Revenge? Revenge was too strong a word. A desire to punish him? Very likely.

In the course of the evening it suddenly struck him that, after all, she might have written that letter with a view of inducing him to come to Rome. She was so capricious. He meditated a long while upon her character without being able to arrive at any very clear estimate of it. But all the while he was thinking of her the suspicion rankled at the back of his mind that he had written her a very intemperate letter. "Good heavens!" he muttered, getting up from his chair suddenly, "if I am suspecting her wrongly! No, no . . . the first reason she gave for writing was that she wished to keep a record of this educational journey." All the old bitter-

ness swam up again, and he felt he had done well by returning her letter. Only by doing so could he prove that she was not going to make a fool of him—she and the cultured Mr. Ellis. But if she were Ellis's mistress, who was responsible? He turned upon himself savagely, hating himself, but he could not blot out his conscience; and the conviction strengthened that by sending her back her letter he had done no more than to repeat the mistake he had made long ago when he spoke against her in church and drove her out of the country. It was he who had driven her into Ellis's arms.

He walked to the window, and stood there a long while staring at the still autumn weather. And while standing there it seemed to him that he would give anything for a piece of blue in the sky, a ray of light on the grass, a wind in the trees. For these still, gray days seemed to deprive him of all courage. He had met a villager yesterday driving a tired horse home from market. The horse tripped and fell by the roadside, and Father Oliver had felt that he, too, might fall at any moment by the roadside, so weary did he feel. "If I could only make known my suffering she would take pity on me, but no one knows another's suffering." And he wandered from his window sighing. A moment after he stopped, he did not know why, in front of his writing table. Perhaps it was the writing table that put the thought into his mind that she might like to read a description of an Irish autumn. He wanted a pretext for a letter: the season was one. He might leave out mention of the angry letter he had sent her.

From Father Oliver Gogarty to Miss Rose Leicester.

"Garranard, Bohola,
"October 10, 19—.

"You know the wind is hardly ever at rest about the hilltop on which my house stands. Even in summer the wind sighs, a long, gentle little sigh, sometimes not unpleasant to hear. You used to speak of an Æolian harp, and say that I should place one on my window sill. A doleful instrument it must be—a loud wailing sound in winter time, and in the summer a little tinkle. But in these autumn days an Æolian harp would be mute. There is not wind enough to-day on the hillside to cause the faintest vibration. Yesterday I went for a long walk in the woods, and I can find no words that would convey an idea of the stillness. It is easy to speak of a tomb, but it was that. After all, the dead are dead. Somnambulism is more mysterious than death, and the season seemed to stand on the edge of a precipice, will-less, like a sleepwalker. Now and then the sound of a falling leaf caught my ear, and I shall always remember how a crow, flying high overhead toward the mountains, uttered an ominous 'caw'; another crow answered, and there was silence again. The branches dropped, and the leaves hung out at the end of long stems. One could not help pitying the trees, though one knew one's pity was vain.

"As I wandered in Derrinrush, I came suddenly upon some blood-red beech trees, and the hollow was full of blood-red leaves. You have been to Derrinrush:

you know how mystic and melancholy the wood is, full of hazels and Druid stones. After wandering a long while I turned into a path. It led me to a rough western shore, and in front of me stood a great Scotch fir. The trunk had divided, and the two crowns showed against the leaden sky. It had two birch trees on either side, and their graceful stems and faint foliage, pale like gold, made me think of dancers with sequins in their hair and sleeves. There seemed to be nothing but silence in the wood—silence, and leaves ready to fall. I had not spoken to anyone for a fortnight—I mean I had no conversation with anyone—and my loneliness helped me to perceive the loneliness of the wood, and the absence of birds made me feel it. The lake is never without gulls, but I didn't see one yesterday. 'The swallows are gone,' I said; 'the wild geese will soon be here,' and I remembered their doleful cry as I scrambled under some blackthorn bushes, glad to get out of the wood into the fields. Though I knew the field I was in well, I didn't remember the young sycamores growing in one corner of it. Yesterday I could not but notice them, for they seemed to be like children dying of consumption in a hospital ward —girls of twelve or thirteen. You will think the comparison far-fetched and unhealthy, one that could only come out of a morbidly excited imagination. Well, I cannot help that; like you, I must write as I feel.

"Suddenly I heard the sound of an ax, and I can find no words to tell you how impressive its sound was in the still autumn day. 'How soon will the tree fall?' I thought; and, desirous of seeing it fall, I walked on,

guided by the sound, till I saw at the end of the glade —whom do you think? Do you remember an old man called Patsy Murphy? He had once been a very good carpenter, and had made and saved money. He is now ninety-five, and I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw him trying to cut down a larch. What his object could be in felling the tree I could not tell, and, feeling some curiosity, I walked forward. He continued to chip away pieces of the bark till his strength failed him, and he had to sit down to rest. Seeing me, he took off his hat—you know the tall hat he wears—a hat given him twenty or thirty years ago—by whom? Patsy Murphy's mind is beginning to wander. He tells stories as long as you will listen to him, and it appears now that his daughter-in-law turned him out of his house—the house he had built himself, and that he had lived in for half a century. This, however, is not the greatest wrong she had done him. He could forgive her this wrong, but he cannot forgive her stealing of his sword. 'There never was a Murphy,' he said, 'who hadn't a sword.' Whether this sword is an imagination of Patsy's fading brain I cannot say; perhaps he had some old sword and lost it. The tale he tells to-day differs wholly from the tale he told yesterday and the tale he will tell to-morrow. He told me once he had been obliged to give up all his savings to his son. I went to interview the son, determined to sift the matter to the bottom, and discovered that Patsy had still one hundred and twenty pounds in the bank. Ten pounds had been taken out for—I needn't trouble you with further details. Sufficient has been said

to enable you to understand how affecting it was to meet this old man in the red and yellow woods, at the end of a breathless autumn day, trying to fell a young larch. He talked so rapidly, and one story flowed so easily into another, that it was a long time before I could get in a word. At last I was able to get out of him that the colonel had given him leave to build a house on the shore, where he would be out of everybody's way. 'All my old friends are gone, the colonel's father and his mother. God be merciful to her! she was a good woman, the very best. And all I want now is time to think of them that's gone. . . . Didn't I know the colonel's grandfather and his grandmother? They're all buried in the cemetery yonder in Kiltoon, and on a fine evenin' I do like to be sittin' on a stone by the lake, thinkin' of them all.'

"It was at once touching and impressive to see this old man, weak as a child, the only trembling thing in a moveless day, telling these wanderings of an insane brain. You will say, But what matter? They may not be true in fact, but they are his truth, they are himself, they are his age. His ninety-five years are represented in his confused talk, half recollection, half complaints about the present. He knew my father and mother, too, and, peering into my face, he caught sight of a gray hair, and I heard him mutter:

"'Ah! they grow gray quicker now than they used to.'

"As I walked home in the darkening light, I remembered that I had only to live a few years to become as

frail as Patsy Murphy, and there is no reason why I shouldn't live till ninety-five, losing my teeth one by one, and my wits."

"OCTOBER 12, 19—.

"I was interrupted in my description of the melancholy season, and I don't know how I should have finished that letter if I had not been interrupted. The truth is that the season was but a pretext. I did not dare to write asking you to forgive me for having returned your letter. I do not do so now. I will merely say that I returned the letter because it annoyed me, and, shameful as the admission may be, I admit that I returned it because I wished to annoy you. I said to myself, 'If this be so—if, in return for kind thought—Why shouldn't she suffer? I suffer.' One isn't—one cannot be—held responsible for every base thought that enters the mind. How long the mind shall entertain a thought before responsibility is incurred I am not prepared to say. One's mood changes, and we become different beings. A storm gathers, rages for a while, and disperses; but the traces of the storm remain after the storm has passed away. I am thinking now that perhaps, after all, you were quite sincere when you asked me to leave Garranard and take my holiday in Rome. In my present mood I see there is no shadow of excuse for attributing base designs to you. The baseness of which for a moment I deemed you capable was the creation of my own soul. I don't mean that my mind, my soul, is always base. At times we are all more or less

unworthy—mystery, mystery, everywhere we look. Our tempers, are they part of our real selves? I have been pondering this question lately. Which self is the true self, now—the peaceful or the choleric? Why shouldn't you wish to see me? There is no reason, and I believe in your good will toward me, and thank you for it. I wonder if I may lay claim to some further indulgence? My wretched temper aggravated my disappointment. You had suggested to me I should write a book about the history of the lake and its castles, and I have been trying to write it; but I cannot, either because I am without talent for literary composition, or from some other cause. I have tried and tried again; I have spent long evenings walking up and down the room trying to arrange my thoughts, but to no purpose. And my failure to write no doubt contributed to produce a nervous depression. Moreover, it seems to me that, without leaving myself open to an accusation of wishing to defend or to excuse my unpardonable rudeness in sending back your letter, I may point out that your—I hardly know what word to use; 'irrelevancy' does not express my meaning; 'inconsequences' is nearer, yet it isn't the word I want—well, your inconsequences perplex and distract one's thoughts. If you will look through the letter you sent me last you will find that you have written many things that might annoy a man living in the conditions in which I live. You follow the current of your mood, but the transitions you omit, and the reader is left hopelessly conjecturing.

"I have been rereading your letters and thinking

over the letter which I returned, and I have compared it with the others, trying to discover the real Rose Leicester, but without much success. I cannot discover any analogy between the woman who used to decorate my altar and sing *Ave Marias* in my church and the woman who takes an interest in Mr. Ellis's adventures in biblical criticism, and to the extent that she cannot keep herself from writing to me about Jeremiah, Hosea, and Amos. Now, if I accept this pedantic woman as the real Rose Leicester, how am I to coördinate her tastes with those of the woman who writes irreverent descriptions of Rubens's 'Descent' and 'Ascent of the Cross,' and to whom the world seems but a toy shop and herself a child running from one plaything to another? Everything in you seems a discrepancy. The men you like are as dissimilar as they could well be. My thought goes back to the father of your child. I do not know if he were a soldier from the barracks or a shepherd from the hills, but, whosoever he was, he certainly differed from the man whose secretary you now are. Yet I suppose you liked him. Your liking for Mr. Ellis is apparent in every sentence you write. . . ."

He stopped writing, and after thinking for a little while he laid down the pen and walked about the room. He had come to the real point of his letter, and having come to it he found himself without words to express himself. What was in his mind was to ask her if she were merely Ellis's secretary, if there was nothing between them but her interest in his books. She had said

that her life would be intolerable if she hadn't acquired an interest in the Bible and in biblical criticism, and he could understand that. But he did not dare to ask her if she loved Mr. Ellis, if there was any chance of her marrying him; if he were to ask such a question she might never write to him again.

"I laid aside my pen, fearing I should ask what are your relations with Mr. Ellis. I have tried to keep myself from putting this question to you, but the torture of doubt overcomes me, and even if you should never write to me again I must ask it. Remember that I am responsible to God for the life you lead. Had it not been for me you would never have known Ellis. You must grant to every man his point of view, and as a Christian I cannot put my responsibility out of mind. If you lose your soul, I am responsible for it. Should you write that your relations with Mr. Ellis are not innocent, I shall not be relieved of my responsibility, but it will be a relief to me to know the truth. I shall pray for you, and you will repent your sins if you are living in sin. Forgive me the question I am putting to you. I have no right to do so whatever. Whatever right I had over you when you were in my parish has passed from me. I exceeded that right, but that is the old story. Maybe I am repeating my very fault again. It is not unlikely, for what do we do all through our lives but to repeat ourselves? You have forgiven me, and, having forgiven me once, maybe you will forgive me again. However this may be, it will be my hope.

"Do not delay writing, for every day will be a little

agony till I hear from you. At the end of an autumn day, when the dusk is sinking into the room, one lacks courage to live. Religion seems to desert one, and I am thinking of the leaves falling, falling, in Derrinrush. All night long they will be falling, like my hopes. Forgive me this long and miserable letter. But if I didn't write it, I should not be able to get through the evening. Write to me. A letter from Italy will cheer me and help me to live. All my letters are not like this one. Not very long ago I wrote to you about a hermit who never wearied of life, though he lived upon an island in this lake. Did you receive that letter? I wonder. Maybe it is still following you about. It was a pleasant letter, and I should be sorry if you did not get it. Write to me about Italy—about sunshine, about statues and pictures.

"Ever sincerely yours,

"OLIVER GOGARTY."

From Father Oliver Gogarty to Miss Rose Leicester.

"GARRANARD, BOHOLA,
"October 20, 19—.

"DEAR MISS LEICESTER:

"I wrote last week apologizing for troubling you again with a letter, pleading that the melancholy of autumn and the falling of the leaf forced me to write to some one. I wrote asking for a letter, saying that one about Italian sunshine would help me to live. I am afraid my letter must have seemed exaggerated. One

writes out of a mood. The mood passes, but when it is with one, one is the victim of it. And this letter is written to say I have recovered somewhat from my depression of spirits. . . . I have found consolation in a book, and I feel that I must send it to you, for even you may one day feel depressed and lonely. Did you ever read 'The Imitation of Christ'? There is no book more soothing to the spirit than it; and on the very first page I found some lines which apply marvelously well to your case:

"'If thou didst know the whole Bible outwardly, and the sayings of all the philosophers, what would it all profit thee without charity and the grace of God?'

"Over the page the saint says: 'Every man naturally desireth to know; but what doth knowledge avail without the fear of God?'

"'Truly, a lowly rustic that serveth God is better than a proud philosopher who pondereth the course of the stars and neglecteth himself.'

"'He that knoweth himself becometh vile to himself, and taketh no delight in the praises of men.'

"'If I knew all things that are in the world, and were not in charity, what would it profit me in the sight of God, who will judge according to deeds?'

"'Cease from overweening desire of knowledge, because many distractions are found there, and much delusion.'

"I might go on quoting till I reached the end, for on every page I note something that I would have you read. But why quote when I can send you the book? You have lost interest in the sentimental side of religion,

but your loss is only momentary. You will never find anyone who will understand you better than this book. You are engaged now in the vain pursuit of knowledge, but some day, when you are weary of knowledge, you will turn to it. I do not ask you to read it now, but promise me that you will keep it. It will be a great consolation to me to know that it is by you.

"Very sincerely yours,

"OLIVER GOGARTY, P.P."

From Father Oliver Gogarty to Miss Rose Leicester.

"GARRANARD, BOHOLA,
"November 3, 19—.

"DEAR MISS LEICESTER:

"I sent you—I think it must be a fortnight ago—a copy of 'The Imitation of Christ.' The copy I sent is one of the original Elizabethan edition, a somewhat rare book and difficult to obtain. I sent you this copy in order to make sure that you would keep it; the English is better than the English of our modern translations. You must not think that I feel hurt because you did not write to thank me at once for having sent you the book. My reason for writing is merely because I should like to know if it reached you. If you have not received it, I think it would be better to make inquiries at once in the post. It would be a pity that a copy of the original Elizabethan edition should be lost. Just write a little short note saying that you have received it.

"Very sincerely yours,

"OLIVER GOGARTY, P.P."

XII

THE "Imitation" dropped on his knees, and he wondered if the spiritual impulse it had awakened in him had been exhausted, or if the continual splashing of the rain on the pane had got upon his nerves.

"But it isn't raining in Italy," he said, getting up from his chair; "and I am weary of the rain, of myself—I am weary of everything." And going to the window he tried to take an interest in the weather, asking himself if it would clear up about three o'clock. It generally cleared late in the afternoon for some short while, and he would be able to go out for half an hour. But where should he go? He foresaw his walk from end to end before he began it: the descent of the hill, the cart track and the old ruts full of water, the dead reeds on the shore soaking, the dripping trees. He knew that about three o'clock the clouds would lift, the sunset would begin in the gaps in the mountains. Perhaps he might get as far as the little fields between Derrinrush and the plantations. From the hillside he could watch the sunset; when the sunset was over he could return home. And then a long evening would lie before him. Terrible! And he began to feel that he must have an occupation—his book! To write the story of the island castles would

pass the time, and wondering how he might write them, whether from oral tradition or from the books and manuscripts which he might find in national libraries, he went out about three o'clock and wandered down the old cart track, getting his feet very wet. When he came to the pine wood he went to the water's edge, and stood looking across the lake, wondering if he should go out to Castle Island in a boat—there was no boat, but he might borrow one somewhere—and examine what remained of the castle. But he knew every heap of old stones, every brown bush, and the thick ivy that twined round the last corner wall. Castle Hag had an interest Castle Island had not. The cormorants roosted there; and they must be hungry, for the lake had been too windy for fishing this long while. A great gust whirled past, and he stood watching the clouds drifting overhead—the same thick vapor drifting and going out. For nearly a month he had waited in vain for a space of blue sky, and it had begun to seem as if the sky would never be blue again. A great sadness fell upon him, a sick longing for a change; but if he yielded to this longing he would never return to Garranard. There seemed to be no way out of the difficulty—at least, he could see none.

A last ray lit up a distant hillside, his shadow floated on the wet sand; then the evening darkened rapidly, and he walked in a vague diffused light, inexpressibly sad.

Father Moran was waiting for him at the end of an old cart track, where the hawthorns grew out of a tumbled wall.

"I've come to see you, Gogarty; I don't know if I'm welcome."

"It's joking you are. You'll stay and have some supper with me?"

"Indeed I will, if you give me some drink, for it's drink that I'm after, and not eating. I'd better get the truth out at once and have done with it. I've felt the craving coming on me for the last few days—you know what I mean—and now it's got me by the throat. I must have drink. Come along, Gogarty, and give me some, and then I'll say good-by to you forever."

"Now what are you saying?"

"Don't stand arguing with me. . . . You can't understand, Gogarty—no one can; I can't myself. But it doesn't matter what anyone understands—I'm done for."

"We'll have a bit of supper together. . . . It will pass from you."

"Ah, you little know;" and the priests walked up the windy hill in silence.

"Gogarty, there's no use talking; I'm done for. Let me go."

"Come in, will you?" and he took him by the arm. "Come in. I'm a bigger man than you, Moran; come in!"

"I'm done for," Father Moran said again.

Father Oliver made a sign of silence, and when they were in the parlor, and the door shut behind them, he said:

"You mustn't talk like that, and Catherine within a step of you."

"I've told you, Gogarty, I'm done for, and I've just come here to bid you good-by; but before we part I'd like to hear you say that I haven't been wanting in my duties—that in all the rest, as far as you know, I've been as good a man as another."

"In all but one thing I know no better man, and I'll not hear that there's no hope."

"Better waste no time talking. Just let me hear you say again that I've been a good man in everything but one thing."

"Yes, indeed;" and the priests grasped hands.

And Catherine came into the room to ask if Father Moran was stopping to supper. Father Oliver answered hurriedly: "Yes, yes, he's staying. Bring in supper as soon as you can;" and she went away, to come back soon after with the cloth. And while she laid it the priests sat looking at each other, not daring to speak, hoping that Catherine did not suspect from their silence and manner that anything was wrong. She seemed to be a long while laying the cloth and bringing in the food; it seemed to them as if she was delaying on purpose. At last the door was closed, and they were alone.

"Now, Moran, sit down and eat a bit, won't you?"

"I can't eat anything. Give me some whisky; that is what I want. Give me some whisky, and I will go away and you'll never see me again. Just a glass to keep me going, and I will go straight out of your parish, so that none of the disgrace will fall upon you; or—what do you think? You could put me up here. No one need know I'm here. All I want are a few bottles of whisky."

"You mean that I should put you up here and let you get drunk?"

"You know what I mean well enough. I'm like that. And it's well for you who don't want whisky. But if it hadn't been for whisky I should have been in a madhouse long ago. Now, just tell me if you'll give me drink. If you will, I'll stay and talk with you, for I know you're lonely; if not, I'll just be off with myself."

"Moran, you'll be better when you've had something to eat. It will pass from you. I will give you a glass of beer."

"A glass of beer! Ah, if I could tell you the truth! We've all our troubles, Gogarty—trouble that none knows but God. I haven't been watching you—I've been too tormented about myself to think much of anyone else—but now and then I've caught sight of a thought passing across your mind. We all suffer, you like another, and when the ache becomes too great to be borne we drink. Whisky is the remedy; there's none better. We drink and forget, and that is the great thing. There are times, Gogarty, when one doesn't want to think, when one's afraid, aren't there?—when one wants to forget that one's alive. You've had that feeling, Gogarty. We all have it. And now I must be off. I must forget everything. I want to drink and to feel the miles passing under my feet."

And on that he got up from the fire.

"Come, Moran, I won't hear you speak like that."

"Let me go. It's no use; I'm done for;" and Father Oliver saw his eyes light up.

"I'll not keep you against your will, but I'll go a piece of the road with you."

"I'd sooner you didn't come, Gogarty."

Without answering, Father Oliver caught up his hat and followed Father Moran out of the house. They walked without speaking, and when they got to the gate Father Oliver began to wonder which way his unhappy curate would choose for escape. "Now, why does he take the southern road?" And a moment after he guessed that Moran was making for Michael Garvey's public house, "and after drinking there," he said to himself, "he'll go on to Tinnick." After a couple of miles, however, Moran turned into a byroad leading through the mountains, and they walked on without saying a word.

And they walked mile after mile through the worn mountain road.

"You've come far enough, Gogarty; go back. Regan's public house is outside of your parish."

"If it's outside my parish, it's only the other side of the boundary; and you said, Moran, that you wouldn't touch whisky till to-morrow morning."

The priests walked on again, and Father Oliver fell to thinking now what might be the end of this adventure. He could see there was no hope of persuading Father Moran from the bottle of whisky.

"What time do you be making it, Gogarty?"

"It isn't ten o'clock yet."

"Then I'll walk up and down till the stroke of twelve. . . . I'll keep my promise to you."

"But they'll all be in bed by twelve. What will you do then?"

Father Moran didn't give Father Gogarty an answer, but started off again, and this time he was walking very fast; and when they got as far as Regan's public house Father Oliver took his friend by the arm, reminding him again of his promise.

"You promised not to disgrace the parish."

"I said that. . . . Well, if it's walking your heart is set upon, you shall have your bellyful of it."

And he was off again like a man walking for a wager. But Father Oliver, who wouldn't be outwalked, kept pace with him, and they went striding along, walking without speaking.

Full of ruts and broken stones, the road straggled through the hills, and Father Oliver wondered what would happen when they got to the top of the hill. For the sea lay beyond the hill. The road bent round a shoulder of the hill, and when Father Oliver saw the long road before him his heart began to fail him, and a cry of despair rose to his lips; but at that moment Moran stopped.

"You've saved me, Gogarty."

He did not notice that Father Gogarty was breathless, almost fainting, and he began talking hurriedly, telling Father Oliver how he had committed himself to the resolution of breaking into a run as soon as they got to the top of the hill.

"My throat was on fire then, but now all the fire is out of it; your prayer has been answered. But what's the matter, Gogarty? You're not speaking."

"What you say is wonderful indeed, Moran, for I was praying for you. I prayed as long as I had breath; one can't pray, without breath, or speak. We'll talk of this presently."

The priests turned back, walking very slowly.

"I feel no more wish to drink whisky than I do to drink bog water. But I'm a bit hot, and I think I'd like a drink, and a drink of water will do me first-rate. Now, look here, Gogarty, a miracle has happened, and we should thank God for it. Shall we kneel down?"

The road was very wet, and they thought it would do as well if they leant over the little wall and said some prayers together.

"I've conquered the devil; I know it. But I've been through a terrible time, Gogarty. It's all lifted from me now. I'm sorry I've brought you out for such a walk as this."

"Never mind the walk, Moran, so long as the temptation has passed from you—that's the principal thing."

To speak of ordinary things was impossible, for they believed in the miracle, and, thanking God for this act of grace, they walked on until they reached Father Oliver's gate.

"I believe you're right, Moran; I believe that a miracle has happened. You'll go home straight, won't you?"

Father Moran grasped Father Oliver's hand.

"Indeed I will."

And Father Oliver stood by his gate looking down the road, and he didn't open it and go through until

Father Moran had passed out of sight. Pushing it open he walked up the gravel path, seeing the lamp burning in his study window, and his eyes fixed upon it, he said to himself that a miracle had happened; a miracle Moran had called it, and verily it seemed like one. But would the miracle endure? Was Father Moran cured of his disease? Father Oliver thought how his curate had gripped his hand, feeling sure that that grip meant a great deal; it meant, "You've done me a great service, one I can never sufficiently repay," and it was a pleasure to think that Moran would always think well of him.

Whatever happened, Moran would always think well of him. He would think well of him because he knew him better than others. And now he would go to bed and think of something else. To-morrow morning he could set off to see Moran. Moran's misfortune interested him, and he resolved to see Moran through it. He began to remember everything from the beginning: his own melancholy by the lake, and how Moran had come down to fetch him; their conversation and the walk through the mountains; their prayer leaning over the wall looking up at the white sky above them, full of white flimsy clouds. It was wonderfully exciting, and he sat thinking, though it was time to go to bed, the lamplight streaming over him, feeling no longer lonely.

But as all roads are said to lead to Rome, so do man's thoughts lead to the woman that lives in his heart; and as Father Oliver stumbled to his feet—he had walked many miles, and was tired—he began to think he must tell Rose of the miracle that had happened about a mile—he

thought it was just a mile—past Patsy Regan's public house. The miracle would impress her, and he looked round the room. It was then he caught sight of a letter—her letter! The envelope and foreign stamp told him that before he read the address—her writing! He turned pale, for she was telling him the very things he had longed to know. There could be no doubt any longer that she was in love with Ellis; she was not only in love with him—she was his mistress!

The room seemed to tumble about him, and he grasped the end of the chimney-piece. And then, feeling that he must get out into the open air, he thought of Moran. He began to feel he must speak to him. He couldn't remember exactly what he had to say to him, but there was something on his mind which he must speak to Moran about. It seemed to him that he must go away with Moran to some public house far away and drink. Hadn't Moran said that there were times when we all wanted drink? He tried to collect his thoughts. . . . Something had gone wrong, but he couldn't remember what had gone wrong or where he was. It seemed to him that somebody had lost her soul. He must seek it. It was his duty. Being a priest, he must go forth and find the soul, and bring it back to God. And then he remembered no more until he found himself suddenly in the midst of a great wood, standing in an open space; about him were dripping trees, and a ghostly sky overhead, and no sound but the sound of the leaves falling. Every now and again a large leaf floated down, and each interested him till it reached the wet earth.

And then he began to wonder why he was in the wood at night, and why he should be waiting there, looking at the glimmering sky, seeing the oak leaves falling. He was looking for her soul, for her lost soul; and something had told him he would find the soul he was seeking in the wood. He was drawn from glade to glade through the underwoods, and through places so thickly overgrown that it seemed impossible to pass through, but even thorn bushes gave way before them. For he was no longer alone. He had found her. She had descended from the trees into his arms, white and cold. Every moment the wood grew dimmer; but when he expected it to disappear, when he thought he was going to escape forever with her, an opening in the trees discovered the lake, and in fear he turned back into the wood, seeking out paths where there was little light. There was no remembrance of the past, only a happy sympathy.

Once he was within the wood the mist seemed to incorporate again; she descended again into his arms, and this time he would have lifted the veil and looked into her face, but she seemed to forbid him to recognize her under penalty of loss. His desire overcame him, and he put out his hand to lift the veil. As he did so his eyes opened, he saw the wet wood, the shining sky, and she sitting by a stone waiting for him. A little later she came to meet him from behind the hawthorns that grew along the cart track—a tall woman with a little bend in her walk.

He wondered why he had been so foolish as to disobey her, and besought her to return to him. They

roamed again in the paths that led round the rocks overgrown with briars, by the great oak tree where the leaves were falling. They had been smiling gently, but suddenly she seemed to tell him that he must abide by the shores of the lake—why he could not understand, for the wood was much more beautiful, and he was more alone with her in the wood than by the lake.

Till now the sympathy had been so complete that there had been no need for words. And now it was no longer her voice! He strove to understand, for what voice could it be but hers? There was a roughness in the voice, and presently he heard somebody asking him why he was about this time of night, and very gradually he began to understand that one of his parishioners was by him, asking him whither he was going.

"You'll be catching your death at this hour of the night, Father Oliver."

And the man told Father Oliver he was on his way to a fair, and for a short cut he had come through the wood. And Father Oliver listened, thinking all the while that he must have been dreaming, for he could remember nothing that had happened.

"Now, your reverence, we're at your own door, and the door is open. When you went out you forgot to close it."

The priest didn't answer.

"I hope no harm will come to your reverence; and you'll be lucky if you haven't caught your death."

XIII

HE stopped in his undressing to remember how Moran had come to him to tell him he was going away on a drinking bout. All that had happened came back to him—he remembered the miracle, and how he had sat down in his armchair to think the matter out after bidding Moran good-by. It was not until he had risen to his feet to go to bed that he had caught sight of the letter. And in it Rose had told him —he could not remember exactly what she had said. The letter was in his pocket, but his brain was too tired to read, and he threw himself into bed, hoping he had misunderstood her letter. He would see it in the morning.

After sleeping for many hours, his eyes at last opened, and he awoke wondering, asking himself where he was. Even the familiar room surprised him. And then began the painful process of picking his way back. He remembered a good deal, but he couldn't remember what had happened from the time he left his house in search of Moran till he was overtaken by Alec in the wood. In some semiconscious state he must have wandered off to Derrinrush. He must have wandered a long while—two hours, maybe more—through the familiar paths, but unaware that he was choosing them. As well as he could remember, he had followed something. He shrank from

trying to remember; he was almost glad to listen to Catherine, who had already learned what had happened. She had come to tell him that Alec had come up from the village to inquire how the priest was.

She waited to hear Father Oliver's account of himself, but not having a story prepared he pretended he was too tired to speak; and as he lay back in his chair he composed a little story, telling how he had been for a long walk with Father Moran, and, coming back in the dark, had missed his way on the outskirts of the wood. She began to raise some objections, but he said she was not to excite herself unduly, and went out to see Alec, who was, fortunately, not a very quick-witted fellow.

So far as Alec remembered, the priest was wandering about like one daft, but Father Oliver impressed upon him that he was mistaken. Alec went away trying to assimilate a very modified version of the incident, and Father Oliver returned to his study wondering if he had succeeded in deceiving Catherine. Apparently he had, for when she came to visit him again from her kitchen she spoke of something quite different; and he was surprised, for she was a very observant woman, and her curiosity was inexhaustible. This time, however, he had managed to keep his secret from her, and, dismissing her, he remembered Rose's letter. She could have only had one object in writing him as she did. She wouldn't have taken the trouble to tell the story of the man who had murdered his mistress's husband unless she were tired of this correspondence, and wished to break it off. She had told the story callously in order to prove to him that she

was indifferent to Christian morality. Her letter was a piece of callous paganism from end to end. Her admiration of Italy, her description of the sculpturesque mountains about Rapallo, were written for a purpose. Her letter seemed to him antichristian even when she spoke of orange trees and terraces and balustrades, and, as if she feared she might be misunderstood, she had added that anecdote—that terrible anecdote—of the man who had murdered his mistress's husband.

From Miss Rose Leicester to Father Oliver Gogarty.

"RAPALLO, ITALY,
"November 12, 19—.

"DEAR FATHER GOGARTY:

"I received 'The Imitation' to-day and your two letters, one asking me if I had got the book. We had left Munich without giving instructions about our letters, so please accept my apologies and my best thanks. The Elizabethan translation, as you point out, is beautiful English, and I am glad to have the book; it will remind me of you, and I will keep it by me even if I do not read it very often. I do not know that it is especially suited to me; it certainly isn't in tune with my present mood, and will you be very shocked if I tell you that it doesn't strike me as a very truthful book? It may be pretty to write, 'Learn to be a fool and to be despised'; but does anyone really want to learn to be a fool and to be despised? Do you? And I don't like any better the admonition, 'If thou canst endure so little, how wilt

thou be able to suffer eternal torments?' I have never felt like this, and I do not think I ever shall. I hope not, for it doesn't seem to me to be a very pretty way of thinking about God. I passed the book over to Mr. Ellis; he read it for a few minutes, and then returned it to me. 'A worthy man, no doubt,' he said, 'but prone to taking things for granted.'

"'The Imitation' reminds me of a flower growing in the shade of a cloister, dying for lack of sun, and this is surely not the right kind of reading for you, above all people, to indulge in at the present moment of your life. Your letters tell me very plainly of your despondency, and I fear I am in a way the cause of it. I was a trouble to you when I was in the parish, and I seem to have become a worse trouble to you now that I am out of it. You brood over your responsibility, and nothing can cure you but change of scene. I feel sure you want a change. Change of scene brings a change of mind. Why don't you come to Italy? Italy is the place for you. Italy is your proper mind. Mr. Ellis says that Italy is every man's proper mind, and you're evidently thinking of Italy, for you ask for a description of where I am staying, saying that a ray of Italian sunlight will cheer you. Come to Italy. You can come here without danger of meeting us. We are leaving at the end of the month. You want the sun. You want life. You want to see people living, not for the next world, but for this, and there is no place where people enjoy life as much as in Italy. Not only the men, but the women enjoy themselves, even the very poorest. The houses of the poor

are odd and pretty, and they are painted pretty colors. There are flowers and plants everywhere, hanging out of balconies and in out-of-the-way niches. The poor wear pretty, quaint clothes, and drink nice wine, and not that horrid porter. And the country! No wonder the Italians were sculptors. The very hills are like pieces of sculpture, quite unlike the Irish hills, shuffling down the sky like an old priest reading his breviary. You will forgive me this phrase, for you are not old, and I cannot help writing it, for it amuses me to write it.

"I am having a heavenly time—yes, indeed, a really heavenly time—and constantly I find myself thanking you for it. For hadn't it been for your bad temper I might still be teaching little barefooted children their A B C in Garranard. But you won't like this allusion, and I feel I am unkind. I would scratch it out, only I should have to write the letter over again. Forget I've written it, and listen to me telling you about Italy. I wish you could see some of the gardens here, the marble gateways and the trees growing about them. You, who are fond of trees, would appreciate the ilex, and the little villages, every one compact round its domed church and campanile, with the house shaded on the sunny side by a screen of vines ten feet or so from the wall. In the fields along the hillside one finds lavender and rosemary and myrtle and sweet bay growing wild—every sort of sweet-scented thing.

"Mr. Ellis and I go for long walks. To-day we walked up to a monastery; it stands in a grove of ilex trees, right at the top of the mountains, two and a half

hours' steady walk up a sunny paved path, where no carts can go—Mont Allegro is its name. The mountains opposite were covered with snow, but the stony valley between us was full of violet mist, and nearly all the way up were olive orchards. We stopped to ponder on the industry of the Italian people in terracing that steep hill for the olives to find roothold. You would be interested in the churches, but I do not know that you would appreciate religion as it is practiced here. It seems to me to be no more than a little superstition affecting human life, no more than the belief in fairies affects the life of the Irish peasant.

" If the people do not go often to confession, they go to fortune tellers, and sometimes the results are serious. A man living in the very street I am living in consulted one about a woman whom he was passionately in love with—his neighbor's wife. The sorcerer told him that very soon the husband, of whom the lover was very jealous, would lose his wife's affection, and the lover was so overjoyed at hearing this that he went away and killed the husband. The poor fellow has been imprisoned in a great old tower built up in the sea. And there can't be much light, for the windows are little holes; and it must be mournful, for the sea growls all the time. I expect he is sorry, and I often wonder how they will punish him.

" But I could go on chattering page after page, telling you about gardens and orange trees (the orange trees are the best part of the decoration; even now the great fruit hangs in the green leaves); and when I had described Italy, and you had described all the castles and

the islands, we could turn back and discuss our religious differences. But I doubt if any good would come of this correspondence. You see, I have got my work to do, and you have got yours, and, notwithstanding all you say, I do not believe you to be unable to write the history of the lake and its castles. Your letters prove that you can, only your mind is unhinged by fears for my spiritual safety, and depressed by the Irish climate. I remember it when I lived in my little cottage, and how lonely I was in the evenings, and how dreadful the thought was that one day I should have to tell you I was going to have a baby, and must go away. There were times when I was so miserable that I knelt down and prayed that I might die. But these moods pass away. . . . Your letter about the hermit that lived on Church Island is most beautiful. You have struck the right note—the wistful Irish note—and if you can write a book in that strain I am sure it will meet with great success. Go on with your book, and don't write to me any more—at least, not for the present. I have got too much to do, and cannot attend to a lengthy correspondence. We are going to Paris, and are looking forward to spending a great deal of time reading in the National Library. Some day we may meet, or take up this correspondence again. At present I feel that it is better for you and better for me that it should cease. But you will not think hardly of me because I write you this. I am writing in your own interests, dear Father Gogarty.

"Very sincerely yours,

"Rose Leicester."

He read the letter slowly, pondering every sentence and every word, and when he had finished it his hand dropped upon his knee; and when the letter fell upon the hearthrug he did not stoop to pick it up, but sat looking into the fire, convinced that everything was over and done. There was nothing to look forward to; his life would drag on from day to day, from week to week, month to month, year to year, till at last he would be taken away to the grave. And to live on, never seeing her or even hearing from her seemed to him the most unbearable lot that could have fallen to his share. The hunt was over, and the spoil lay hearing with dying ears the horns calling to each other in the echoing distances; and cast in his chair, his arms hanging like dead arms, his senses mercifully benumbed, he lay, how long he knew not, but it must have been a long time.

Catherine came into the room with some spoons in her hands, and asked him what the matter was, and, getting up hastily, he answered her rudely, for her curiosity annoyed him. It was irritating to have to wait for her to leave the room, but he did not dare to begin thinking again while she was there. The door closed at last; he was alone again, and his thoughts fixed themselves at once on the end of her letter, on the words, "Go on with your book, and don't write to me any more —at least, not for the present. I have got too much to do, and cannot attend to a lengthy correspondence." The evident cruelty of her words surprised him. There was nothing like this in any of her other letters. She intended these words as a *coup de grâce*. There was little

mercy in them, for they left him living, he still lived—in a way.

There was no use trying to misunderstand her words. To do so would be foolish, even if it were possible for him to deceive himself, and the rest of her letter mattered nothing to him. Her descriptions of Italy and her admiration of a murderer he regarded as the common affectations of "culture," and he had little taste for them. The two little sentences with which she dismissed him were his sole concern; they were the keys to the whole of this correspondence which had beguiled him. And to beguile him had been her primary object. Fool that he had been not to see it! Alas! we see only what we want to see. He might have known that she would not have put herself to the trouble of writing all these letters without a purpose, pages and pages, and her purpose was his punishment. Well, she had succeeded, and to the top of her bent. Nor would he attempt to argue that he did not deserve all the punishment that she had measured out to him. Great as the pain of loss undoubtedly was, it seemed to him that he could bear that pain with greater fortitude if there had not been added the possibly greater pain of finding her unworthy. The intrigue he had discovered was a miserably cruel one. Such an intrigue should have been played off on a man of the world; to select a poor lonely priest like him was not worthy of her.

Occasionally he meditated Ellis's complicity in this intrigue. But Ellis didn't interest him—this man was a shadow—and he wandered about, trying to bring him-

self to hate her. He even stopped in his walks to address insulting words to her. Words of common abuse came to his tongue readily, but there was an unconquerable tenderness in his heart always; and one day the thought went by that it was nobler of her to make him suffer than to have meekly forgiven him, as many women would have done, remembering he was a priest. He stopped affrighted, and presently he began to wonder if this were the first time her easy forgiveness of his mistake had seemed suspicious. No, he remembered that some sort of shadow of disappointment had passed at the back of his mind when he read her first letter. After having been buried for months at the back of his mind this idea had come to the surface. Truly an extraordinary perversion, which he could only account for by the fact that he had always looked upon her as being more like what the primitive woman must have been than anyone else in the world, and the first instinct of the primitive woman would be to revenge any slight on her sexual pride. He had misread her character, and in this new reading he found a temporary consolation.

As he sat thinking of her he heard a mouse gnawing under the boards, and every night after the mouse came to gnaw. "The teeth of regret are the same; my life is being gnawed away. . . . Never shall I see her." It seemed impossible that life would close on him, and he not to see her face or hear her voice again. The blackness of the loveless death he saw in front of him turned his thoughts heavenward, and he began to think how it would be if they were to meet on the other side. For he

believed in heaven, and that was a good thing. Without such belief there would be nothing for him to do but to go down to the lake and make an end of himself. But believing as he did in heaven, and the holy Catholic Church to be the surest way of getting there, he had a great deal to be thankful for. . . . Ellis's possession of her was but temporary, a few years at most, whereas his possession of her, if he were so fortunate as to gain heaven, and by his prayers to bring her back to the true fold, would endure forever and ever. The wisest thing, therefore, for him to do would be to enter a Trappist monastery. But our Lord says that in heaven there is neither marriage nor giving in marriage, and what would heaven be to him without Rose? No more than a union of souls, and he wanted her body as well as her soul. He must pray. He knew the feeling well—a sort of mental giddiness, a delirium in the brain; and it increased rapidly, urging him to fall on his knees. If he resisted, it was because he was ashamed and feared to pray to God to reserve Rose for him. But the whirl in his brain soon deprived him of all power of resistance, and, looking round the room hurriedly to assure himself he was not watched, he fell on his knees and burst into extemporary prayer: "*O my God, whatever punishment there is to be borne, let me bear it. She sinned, no doubt, and her sins must be atoned for. Let me bear the punishment that Thou, in Thy infinite wisdom, must adjudge to her, poor sinful woman that she is, poor woman persecuted by men, persecuted by me. O my God, remember that I lent a willing ear to scandalmongers, that I went down that day*

to the school and lost my temper with her, that I spoke against her in my church. All the sins that have been committed are my sins; let me bear the punishment. O my Lord Jesus Christ, do Thou intercede with Thy Father and ask Him to heap all the punishment on my head. O dear Lord Jesus, if I had only thought of Thee when I went down to the school, if I had remembered Thy words, 'Let him who is without sin cast the first stone,' I should have been spared this anguish. If I had remembered Thy words she might have gone to Dublin and had her baby there, and come back to the parish. O my God, the fault is mine; all the faults that have been committed can be traced back to me; therefore I beseech of Thee, I call upon Thee, to let me bear all the punishment that she has earned by her sins, poor erring creature that she is. O my God, do this for me; remember that I served Thee well for many years when I lived among the poor folk in the mountains. For all these years I ask this thing of Thee, that Thou wilt let me bear her punishment. Is it too much I am asking of Thee, O my God, is it too much?"

When he got up from his knees a chime of bells seemed to be going on in his head, and he wondered if another miracle had happened. It certainly was as if some one had laid hands on him and forced him on his knees. But to ask the Almighty to extend His protection to him rather than to Mr. Ellis, who was a Protestant, seemed not a little gross. Father Oliver experienced a shyness that he had never known before, and he hoped the Almighty would not be offended at the familiarity

of the language, or the intimate nature of the request, for to ask for Rose's body as well as her soul was not very orthodox.

Next day his mood had changed, and the Mass he offered up that she might not die in mortal sin seemed to him a very trite and commonplace affair compared with the personal ecstasy of his prayer over night. A moment of religious ecstasy had been vouchsafed to him, but he must not understand this last spiritual exaltation as a return to religion; and feeling that his faith was about to be taken from him, he looked back upon his prayer as a belated bird struggling after the flock that had disappeared long ago over the horizon. It was queer to think like that. Perhaps his brain was giving way. And he pushed the plates aside; he could not eat any dinner, nor could he take any interest in his garden.

The dahlias were over, the chrysanthemums were beginning, and in these languid autumn days the desire to write to Rose crept nearer, until it always seemed about him, like some familiar animal. Never had the country seemed so still; dead birds in the woods, and the sounds of leaves, and the fitful November sunlight on the strands—these were his distractions when he went out for a walk, and when he came in he often thought it would be well if he did not live to see another day, so heavy did the days seem, so uninteresting had life become. Very often there was a lightness in his brain which he could not account for, a desire to go mad, a nervous sense of time and things; the strain grew so

intense that he fancied something would break in his brain, and to save himself he began a letter.

From Father Oliver Gogarty to Miss Rose Leicester.

"GARRANARD, BOHOLA,
"November 18, 19—.

"DEAR MISS LEICESTER:

"I should have written to you before, but I lacked courage. Do you remember saying that the loneliness of the country sometimes forced you to kneel down to pray that you might die? I think the loneliness that overcame you was the loneliness that comes at the end of an autumn day when the dusk gathers in the room. It seems to steal all one's courage away, and one looks up from one's work in despair, asking of what value is one's life. The world goes on just the same, grinding our souls away. Nobody seems to care; nothing seems to make any difference.

"Human life is a very lonely thing; I never knew how lonely till this autumn. Perhaps my perceptions were quickened by your kind advice to come abroad. A caged bird simply beats its wings and dies, but a human being does not die of loneliness, even when he prays for death. You have experienced it all, and you will know what I feel when I tell you that I spend my time watching the eternal rain, thinking of sunshine, picture galleries, and libraries.

"But you were right to bid me remain here, fulfilling the duties that I had undertaken. Had I gone away, as

you first suggested, I should have been unhappy, for I should have thought continually of the poor people I had left behind; and the fear that I had expressed in my letter, that if I once went away I should not return, has become a settled conviction. I might get a parish in England or a chaplaincy, but I should always look upon the desertion of my poor people as a moral delinquency. A quiet conscience is, after all, a great possession, and for the sake of a quiet conscience I will remain here, and you will be able to understand my scruple when you think how helpless my people are, and how essential is the kindly guidance of the priest.

"Without a leader the people are helpless; they wander like sheep on a mountain side, falling over rocks or dying amid snowdrifts. Sometimes the shepherd grows weary of watching, and the question arises if one has no duty toward one's self. Then one begins to wonder what is one's duty and what is duty—if duty is more than the opinions of others, a convention which no one would like to hear called into question, because he feels instinctively that it is well for everyone to continue in the rut, for, after all, a rut means a road, and roads are necessary. If one lets one's self go on thinking, one very soon finds that wrong and right are indistinguishable, so perhaps it is better to follow the rut if one can. But following of the rut is beset with difficulties; there are big holes on either side. Sometimes the road ends nowhere, and one gets lost in spite of one's self. But why am I writing all these things to you?"

Why, indeed? If he were to send this letter she would show it to Mr. Ellis, and they would laugh over it together. "Poor priest!" they would say. He crumpled up the paper and threw it into the fire. "My life is unendurable," he said, as he watched the sheets of paper burn. "And it will grow worse." He fell to thinking how he would grow old, getting every day more like an old stereotyped plate, the Mass and the rosary at the end of his tongue, and nothing in his heart. He had seen many priests like this. Could he fall into such miserable decadence? Could such obedience to rule be any man's duty? But where should he go? What matter where he went, for he would never see her any more, and she was, after all, the only real thing in the world for him.

So did he continue to suffer like an animal, mutely, instinctively, mourning his life away, forgetful of everything but his grief; unmindful of his food, and unable to sleep when he lay down, or to distinguish between familiar things—the birds about his house, the boys and girls he had baptized. He had to think a moment before he knew which was Mary and which was Bridget, which was Patsy and which was Mike, and very often Catherine was in the parlor many minutes before he noticed her presence. She stood watching him, wondering of what he was thinking, for he sat in his chair, getting weaker and thinner; and soon he began to look haggard as an old man or one about to die. He seemed to grow feebler in mind; his attention wandered away every few minutes from the book he was reading. Catherine noticed the

change, and, thinking that a little chat would be of help, she often came up from her kitchen to tell him the gossip of the parish; but he could not listen to her, her garrulousness seemed to him more than ever unbearable, and he kept a book by him, an old copy of "Ivanhoe"; when he heard her step he pretended he was reading it.

Father Moran often came to discuss the business of the parish with him. He had insisted on relieving Father Oliver of a great deal of it, saying that he wanted a rest, and he often urged Father Oliver to go away for a holiday. He was kind, but his talk was wearisome, and Father Oliver thought he would prefer to read about the fabulous Rowena than to hear any more about the archbishop. But when Father Moran left, Rowena bored him, and so completely that he could not remember at what point he had left off reading, and his thoughts wandered from the tournament to some phrase he had made use of in writing to Rose, or, it might be, some phrase of hers that would suddenly spring into his mind. He sought no longer to discover her character from her letters, nor did he criticise the many contradictions which had perplexed him; it seemed to him that he accepted her now, as the phrase goes, "as she was," thinking of her as he might of some supernatural being whom he had offended, and who had revenged herself. Her wickedness became in his eyes an added grace, and from the rack on which he lay he admired his executioner. Even her liking for Mr. Ellis became submerged in a tide of suffering, and of longing, and weakness of spirit. He no longer had any strength to question her liking for the minor

prophets; there were discrepancies in everyone, and no doubt there were in him as well as in her. He had once been very different from what he was to-day. Once he was an ardent student in Maynooth, he had been an energetic curate; and now what was he? Worse still, what was he becoming? And he allowed his thoughts to dwell on the fact that every day she was receding from him. He, too, was receding. All things were receding—becoming dimmer.

He piled the grate up with turf, and when the blaze came leaned over it, warming his hands, asking himself why she liked Mr. Ellis rather than him. For he no longer tried to conceal from himself the fact that he loved her. He had played the hypocrite long enough; he had spoken about her soul, but it was herself that he wanted. This admission brought some little relief, but he felt that the relief would only be temporary. Alas! it was surrender. It was worse than surrender—it was abandonment. He could sink no deeper. But he could; we can all sink deeper. Now what would the end be? There is an end to everything; there must be an end even to humiliation, to self-abasement. It was Moran over again. Moran was ashamed of his vice, but he had to accept it, and Father Oliver thought how much it must have cost his curate to come to tell him that he wanted to lie drunk for some days in an outhouse in order to escape for a few days from the agony of living. "That is what he called it, and I, too, would escape from it."

He remembered a poem, a beautiful poem, written by a peasant in County Cork a hundred years ago. This

man met a woman who inspired such a passion that his brain gave way. She deserted him, but before he went mad he composed this set of verses, "which will live always, and always be read and admired by men like myself," Father Oliver murmured, "for there will always be men who are suffering as I am to-day." And he wondered if madness would be the end of his suffering, or if he would go down to the lake and find rest in it.

"Oh, succor me, dear one, give me a kiss from thy mouth,
And lift me up to thee from death,
Or bid them make for me a narrow bed, a coffin of boards,
In the dark neighborhood of the worm and his friends.
My life is not life but death, my voice is no voice but a wind,
There is no color in me, nor life, nor richness, nor health;
But in tears and sorrow and weakness, without music, without sport, without power,
I go into captivity and woe, and in the pain of my love of thee."

XIV

From Father Oliver Gogarty to Miss Rose Leicester.

"Garranard, Bohola,
"March 12, 19—.

A LONG time has passed without your hearing from me, and I am sure you must have said more than once: 'Well, that priest has more sense than I gave him credit for. He took the hint. He understood that it would be useless for us to continue to write long letters to each other about remorse of conscience and Mr. Ellis's criticism of the Bible.' But the sight of my handwriting will call into question the opinion you have formed of my good sense, and you will say: 'Here he is, beginning it all over again.' No, I am not. I am a little ashamed of my former letters, and am writing to tell you so. My letters, if I write any, will be quite different in the future, thanks to your candor. Your letter from Rapallo cured me; like a surgeon's knife, it took out the ulcer that was eating my life away. The expression will seem exaggerated, I know; but let it remain. You no doubt felt that I was in ignorance of my own state of feelings regarding you, and you wrote just such a letter as would force me to look into my heart and to discover who I really was. You felt that you

could help me to some knowledge of myself by telling me about yourself.

"The shock on reading your confession—for I look upon your Rapallo letter as one—was very great, for on reading it I realized that a good deal that I had written to you about the salvation of your soul was inspired, not by any pure fear that I had done anything that might lose a soul to God, but by pure selfishness. I did not dare to write boldly that I loved yourself, and would always love you; I wore a mask and a disguise, and in order to come to terms with myself I feel it necessary to confess to you; otherwise all the suffering I have endured would be wasted.

"But this is not all my confession; worse still remains. I have discovered that when I spoke against you in church, and said things that caused you to leave the parish, I did not do so, as I thought, because I believed that the morality of my parish must be maintained at any cost. I know now that jealousy—yes, sensual jealousy—prompted me. And when I went to my sisters to ask them to appoint you to the post of music teacher in their school, I did not do so for their sake, but for my own, because I wished to have you back in the parish. But I do not wish you to think that when I wrote about atonement I wrote what I knew to be untrue. I did not; the truth was hidden from me. Nor did I wish to get you back to the parish in order that I might gratify my passion. All these things were very vague, and I didn't understand myself until now. I have never had any experience of life; you were my first experience. It is curious that

one should know so little of one's self, and I might have gone down to my grave without ever knowing how false I was at heart, if I had not been stricken down with a great illness.

"One day Catherine told me that the lake was frozen over, and, as I had been within doors a long while, she advised me to go out and see the boys sliding on the ice. Her advice put an idea into my head, that I might take out my skates and skate recklessly without trying to avoid the deeper portions where the ice was likely to be thin. I was weary of life, and knowing that I could not go back upon the past, and that no one would ever love me, I wished to bring my suffering to an end. You will wonder why I did not think of the sufferings that I might have earned for myself in the next world. I had suffered so much that I could think of nothing but the present moment. God was good, and He saved me, for as I stood irresolute before a piece of ice which I knew wouldn't bear me, I felt a great sickness creeping over me. I returned home, and for several days the doctor could not say whether I would live or die. You remember Catherine, my servant? She told me that the only answer the doctor would give her was that if I were not better within a certain time there would be no hope of my recovery. At the end of the week he came into my room. Catherine was waiting outside, and I hear that she fell on her knees to thank God when the doctor said: 'Yes, he is a little better; if there's no relapse he'll live.'

"After a severe illness one is alone with one's self, and the whole of one's life sings in one's head like a

song. Listening to it, I learned that jealousy had prompted me to speak against you, and not any real care for the morality of my parish. I discovered, too, that my moral ideas were not my own. They had been borrowed from others, and badly assimilated. I remembered how at Maynooth the tradition was always to despise women, and in order to convince myself I used to exaggerate this view, and say things that made my fellow-students look upon me askance, if not with suspicion. But when the body is at rest the mind is clear, and dozing through long convalescent hours many things hitherto obscure to me became clear, and it seems now to me to be clearly wrong to withhold our sympathy from any side of life. It seems to me that it is only by our sympathy we can do any good at all. God gave us our human nature; we may misuse and degrade our nature, but we must never forget that it came originally from God.

"What I am saying may not be in accordance with current theology, but I am not thinking of theology, but of the things that were revealed to me during my sickness. It was through my fault that you met Mr. Ralph Ellis, and I must pray to God that He will bring you back to the fold. I shall pray for you both. I wish you all happiness, and I thank you for the many kind things you have said, for the good advice you have given me. You are quite right: I want a change. You advise me to go to Italy, and you are right to advise me to go there, for my heart yearns for Italy. But I dare not go; for I still feel that if I left my parish I should never return to it; and if I were to go away and not return a great

scandal would be caused, and I am more than ever resolved not to do anything to grieve the poor people, who have been very good to me, and whose interests I have neglected this long while.

"I send this letter to Ethelstone Manor, where you will find it on your return. As I have already said, you need not answer it; no good will come by answering it. In years to come, perhaps, when we are both different, we may meet again.

"OLIVER GOGARTY."

From Miss Rose Leicester to Father Oliver Gogarty.

"IMPERIAL HOTEL, CAIRO, EGYPT,
"May 5, 19—.

"DEAR FATHER GOGARTY:

"By the address on the top of this sheet of paper you will see that I have traveled a long way since you last heard from me, and ever since your letter has been following me about from hotel to hotel. It is lucky that it has caught me up in Egypt, for we are going East to visit countries where the postal service has not yet been introduced. We leave here to-morrow. If your letter had been a day later it would have missed me; it would have remained here unclaimed—unless, indeed, we come back this way, which is not likely. You see what a near thing it was; and as I have much to say to you, I should be sorry not to have had an opportunity of writing.

"Your last letter has put many thoughts into my head, and made me anxious to explain many things

which I feel sure you do not know about my conduct since I left London, and the letters I have written to you. Has it not often seemed strange to you that we go through life without ever being able to reveal the soul that is in us? Is it because we are ashamed, or is it that we do not know ourselves? Certainly it is a very hard task to learn the truth about ourselves, and I appreciate the courage your last letter shows; you have faced the truth, and having learned it, you write it to me in all simplicity. I like you better now, Oliver Gogarty, than I ever did before, and I always liked you. But it seems to me that to allow you to confess yourself without confessing myself, without revealing the woman's soul in me as you have revealed the man's soul in yourself, would be unworthy. Our destinies got somehow entangled, there was a wrench, the knot was broken, and the thread was wound upon another spool. The unraveling of the piece must have perplexed you, and you must have wondered why the shape and the pattern should have passed suddenly away into thread again, and then, after a lapse of time, why the weaving should have begun again.

"You must have wondered why I wrote to you, and you must have wondered why I forgave you for the wrong you did me. I guessed that our friendship when I was in the parish was a little more than the platonic friendship that you thought it was, so when you turned against me, and were unkind, I found an excuse for you. When my hatred was bitterest, I knew somehow, at the back of my mind—for I only allowed myself to think of

it occasionally—that you acted from—there is but one word—jealousy (not a pretty word from your point of view); and it must have shocked you, as a man and as a priest, to find that the woman whom you thought so much of, and whose society gave you so much pleasure (I know the times we passed together were as pleasant to you as they were to me), should suddenly, without warning, appear in a totally different light, and in a light which must have seemed to you mean and sordid. The discovery that I was going to have a baby threw me suddenly down from the pedestal on which you had placed me; your idol was broken, and your feelings—for you are one of those men who feel deeply—got the better of you, and you indulged in a few incautious words in your church.

"I thought of these things sometimes, not often, I admit, in the little London lodging where I lived till my baby was born, seeing my gown in front getting shorter, and telling lies to good Mrs. Dent about the husband whom I said was abroad, whom I was expecting to return. That was a miserable time, but we won't talk of it any more. When Father O'Grady showed me the letter that you wrote him, I forgave you in a way. A woman forgives a man the wrongs he does when these wrongs are prompted by jealousy, for, after all, a woman is never really satisfied if a man is not a little jealous. His jealousy may prove inconvenient, and she may learn to hate it and think it an ugly thing and a crooked thing, but, from her point of view, love would not be complete without it.

"I smiled, of course, when I got your letter telling me that you had been to your sisters to ask them if they would take me as a schoolmistress in the convent, and I walked about smiling, thinking of your long innocent drive round the lake. I can see it all, dear man that you are, thinking you could settle everything, and that I would return to Ireland to teach barefooted little children their catechism and their A B C. How often has the phrase been used in our letters! It was a pretty idea of yours to go to your sisters; you did not know then that you cared for me—you only thought of atonement. I suppose we must always be deceived. Mr. Ellis says self-deception is the very law of life. We live enveloped in self-deception as in a film; now and again the film breaks like a cloud and the sun shines through. It is really very difficult to tell the truth, Father Gogarty; I find it difficult now to tell you why I wrote all these letters. Because I liked you? Yes, and a little bit because I wished you to suffer; I don't think I shall ever get nearer the truth than that. But when I asked you to meet us abroad, I did so in good faith, for you are a clever man, and Mr. Ellis's studies would please you. At the back of my mind I suppose I thought to meet him would do you good; I thought, perhaps, that he might redeem you from some conventions and prejudices. I don't like priests; the priest was the only thing about you I never liked. Was it in some vain, proselytizing idea that I invited you? Candidly, I don't know, and I don't think I ever shall; there is much that we don't know, not only about the next world, but even about this.

"I said in one of my letters that I was not suited to Ireland, and what I meant by that was that this world was good enough for me, that I liked to live in a world of ideas and human passions, and that religion did not interest me. The book you sent me, 'The Imitation,' I did not like at all, and I wrote to tell you to put it by, to come abroad and see pictures and statues in a beautiful country where people do not drink horrid porter, but nice wine, and where sacraments are left to the old people who have nothing else to interest them. I suppose it was a cruel, callous letter, but I did not mean it so; I merely wanted to give you a glimpse of my new life and my new point of view. As for this letter, Heaven knows how you will take it—whether you will hate me for it or like me; but since you wrote quite frankly to me, confessing yourself from end to end, I feel bound to tell you everything I know about myself—and since I left Ireland I have learned a great deal about myself and about life. Perhaps I should have gone on writing to you if Mr. Ellis had not one day said that no good would come of this long correspondence; he suspected I was a disturbing influence, and, as you were determined to live in Ireland, he said it were better that you should live in conventions and prejudices; without them your life would be impossible.

"Then came your last letter, and it showed me how right Mr. Ellis was. Nothing remains now but to beg your forgiveness for having vainly disturbed your life. The disturbance is, perhaps, only a passing one. You may recover your ideas—the ideas that are necessary to you—

or you may go on discovering the truth, and in the end may perhaps find a way whereby you may leave your parish without causing scandal. To be quite truthful, that is what I hope will happen. However this may be, I hope if we ever meet again it will not be till you have ceased to be a priest. But all this is a long way ahead. We are going East, and shall not be back for many months; we are going to visit the buried cities in Turkestan. I do not know if you have ever heard about these cities. They were buried in sand somewhere about a thousand years ago, and some parts have been disinterred lately. Vaults have been discovered, and were broken into in search of treasure. Gold and precious stones were discovered, but far more valuable than the gold and silver, so says Mr. Ellis, are certain papyri now being deciphered by the learned professors of Berlin.

"You know the name of Mr. Ellis's book, 'The Source of the Christian River'? He had not suspected that its source went farther back than Palestine, but now he says that some papyri may be found that will take it far back into Central Asia.

"I am going with him on this quest. It sounds a little absurd, doesn't it? my going in quest of the Christian river? But if one thinks for a moment, one thing is as absurd as another. Do you know, I find it difficult to take life seriously, and I walk about the streets thinking of you, Father Gogarty, and the smile that will come over your face, half-angry, half-pleased, when you read that your schoolmistress is going to Central Asia in quest of the Christian river. What will you be doing all this

time? You say that you cannot leave your parish because you fear to give scandal; you fear to pain the poor people, who have been good to you and who have given you money, and your scruple is a noble one; I appreciate and respect it. But we must not think entirely of our duties to others; we must think of our duties to ourselves. Each one must try to realize himself—I mean that we must try to bring the gifts that Nature gave us to fruition. Nature has given you many gifts: I wonder what will become of you?

"Very sincerely yours,

"Rose Leicester."

"Good God, how I love that woman!" the priest said, awaking from his reverie, for the clock told him that he had sat for nearly three-quarters of an hour, her letter in his hand, after having read it. And lying back in his armchair, his hands clasped, his eyes fixed on the window, listening to the birds singing in the vine—it was already in leaf, and the shadows of the leaves danced across the carpet—he sought to define that sense of delight—he could find no other words for it—which she exhaled unconsciously as a flower exhales its perfume, that joy of life which she scattered with as little premeditation as the birds scattered their songs. But though he was constantly seeking some new form of expression of her charm, he always came back to the words "sense of delight." Sometimes he added that sense of delight which we experience when we go out of the house on an April morning and find everything

growing about us, the sky willful and blue, and the clouds going by, saying, "Be happy as we are."

She was so different from every other woman. All other women he had met were plain instincts, come into the world for the accomplishment of things that women had accomplished for thousands of years. They were no more than animated clay, whereas this woman seemed to him a spirit. That she had been the mistress of a soldier or a shepherd in his parish, that she was now the mistress of the cultured Mr. Ellis, did not seem to materialize her. He pondered, trying to explain to himself how this might be, finding only this explanation, that materialism is not fleshy lust but conformity to a code. Other women think as their mothers thought, and as their daughters will think, expressing the thoughts of the countless generations behind and in front of them. But this woman was moved merely by impulses; and what is more inexplicable than an impulse? What is the earth but an impulse? This woman was as mysterious as the impulse we know as the springtide. She was as mysterious as the breath of spring; she was the springtide, and henceforth he thought of her as Primeveræ. And just as the sun blinds us when we look upon it, so did she blind him. Light can deprive us of sight as well as darkness. In no other way could he explain her. She was quite clear to him, though he could not find words to express her clearly. She had once said to him—she had come to gather flowers for the altar; he was talking of the music she had played that afternoon, of her singing, and the difference it made to him to have one who could

direct the music in his church, and she had said—" I look upon myself as your amusement. You are a ruler in this parish; you direct it, you administer its affairs, the administration of the parish is your business, and I am the little amusement that you turn to when your business is done." He had not known how to answer her. In this way her remarks often covered him with confusion. She just thought as she pleased, and spoke as she pleased, and he returned to his idea that she was more than anyone else like what the primitive woman must have been.

Pondering on her words for the hundredth time, they seemed to him stranger than ever. That any human being should admit that she was but the delight of another's life seemed at first only extraordinary, but if one considered her words, it seemed to signify knowledge—latent, no doubt—that her beauty was part of the great agency. Her words implied that she was aware of her mission. She had not spoken herself, it was her unconscious self that had spoken, and it was that very fact that had given significance to her words.

For a moment he escaped from the tangle of his own special unhappiness, and believed himself to be on the point of discovering what he had long sought, an explanation of this woman's charm; not only of her charm, but of herself so utterly—he recurred to an old idea—so utterly emancipated from all human obligations. Was there one among Shakespeare's fantastic half women, half spirits who reminded him most of Rose? Was she Miranda, or Puck, or Ariel? Shakespeare created many of these creatures, apparently emancipated from reality,

and yet expressing a great deal of reality. She seemed to him to go back to an earlier time, and he turned to the joyous animality of woodland antiquity, feeling sure there must be some pagan myth in which a goddess came down to earth to take her joy among men, an irresponsible being obedient to no human laws.

As he sat looking through his window his thoughts went off at right angles. He had often desired a fountain—a garden without a fountain had always seemed to him incomplete—but it would be too expensive to bring water up from the lake. It was a pity, for a fountain amid his roses would be a refreshment for the garden all the summer time. Now it occurred to him, and suddenly, that she shed light upon his life, just as a fountain sheds refreshment upon the garden—she was like a fountain! A fountain was the only simile he could find that conveyed any idea of this extraordinary woman, controlled, no doubt, as the fountain, by some law, but a law hidden from him. The water seemed to burst up as it liked. The water sang a tune which could not be caught and written down in notes, but which nevertheless existed. The water was full of iridescent colors, changing every moment. The fountain was the best simile he could find for that joy and beauty and grace, that enchantment of the senses, one by one, which he had known, which had appeared to him in the name of Rose Leicester.

At that moment Catherine came into the room. "No, not now," he said; and he went into the garden and through the wicket at the other end, remembering how he had gone out last year on a day just like the

present day, trying to keep thoughts of her out of his mind.

The day was the fifteenth of May. Last year the sky was low and full of cottonlike clouds; the lake seemed to doze and murmur about the smooth limestone shingle. There was a chatter of ducks in the reeds; the reeds themselves were talking. This year the sky was brighter; there was more blue in it, the clouds lifted. The lake was very still; there was less mist about. Suddenly it occurred to him that it was this day last year that he had begun to grieve about her. As he wandered about the shore, sorrow had begun to lap about his heart like soft lake water. He had thought he was grieving deeply, but that was because he did not know what grief was. Since last year he had learned all that a man could know of grief. Last year he was able to take an interest in the spring, to watch for the hawthorn bloom; this year he didn't take any interest in them. What matter whether they bloomed a week earlier or a week later? As a matter of fact they were late. The frost had thrown them back. There would be no flowers till June. Last year he had admired the larches. How beautifully the tasseled branches swayed, throwing shadows on the long May grass! And they were not less beautiful this year, though they were less interesting to him.

He wandered through the woods, over the country, noting the different signs of spring, for, in spite of his sorrow, he could not but admire the slender spring. He could not tell why, but he always associated Rose with the gayety of the springtime. She was thin like

the spring, and her laughter was blithe like the spring. She seemed to him like a spirit, and isn't the spring like a spirit? He recognized her in the cow parsley just coming up, and the sight of the campions between the white spangles reminded him of the pink flowers she wore in her hat. The underwood was full of bluebells, and he thought of her eyes. The aspens on the hillside were brown—the aspen was gayer and less ceremonial than the poplar—and he noticed the little green and yellow leaves of the willows, and he came to a place where they stood all a-row in front of a stream, like girls courtesying.

Seeing a bird disappear into a hole in the wall, he climbed up. The bird pecked at him, for she was hatching. "A starling," he said. In the field behind his house, under the old hawthorn tree, an amiable-looking donkey had given birth to a foal, and he watched the little thing, no bigger than a sheep, covered with long gray hair. . . . There were some parishioners he would be sorry to part with, and there was Catherine. If he went away he would never see her again, nor all those who lived in the village. All this present reality would fade, his old church, surrounded with gravestones and stunted Scotch firs, would become like a dream, every year losing a little in color and outline. He was going, he did not know when, but he was going. For a long time the feeling had been gathering in him that he was going, and the letter he had just read had increased that feeling. He would go just as soon as a reputable way of leaving his parish was revealed to him.

By the help of his reason he could not hope to find out the way. Nothing seemed more impossible than that a way should be found for him to leave his parish without giving scandal; but however impossible things may seem to us, nothing is impossible to Nature. He must put his confidence in Nature; he must listen to her. She would tell him. And he lay all the afternoon listening to the reeds and the ducks talking together in the lake. Very often the wood was like a harp; a breeze touched the strings, and every now and then the murmur seemed about to break into a little tune, and as if in emulation, or because he remembered his part in the music, a blackbird, perched near to his mate, whose nest was in the hawthorns growing out of the tumbled wall, began to sing a joyful lay in a rich round contralto, soft and deep as velvet. "All nature," he said, "is talking or singing. This is talking and singing time. But my heart can speak to no one, and I seek places where no one will come." And he began to wonder if he prayed he might die God would answer his prayer.

The sunlit grass, already long and almost ready for the scythe, was swept by shadows of the larches, those long, downward-growing boughs hung with green tassels, moving mysteriously above him. Birds came and went, each on its special errand. Never was Nature more inveigling, more restful. He shut his eyes, shapes passed, dreams filled the interspaces. Little thoughts began. Why had he never brought her here? A memory of her walking under those hawthorns would be delightful. The murmur of the boughs dissipated his dreams or changed

them, or brought new ones; his consciousness grew fainter, and he could not remember what his last thoughts had been when he opened his eyes.

And then he wandered out of the wood, into the sunlit country, along the dusty road, trying to take an interest in everyone whom he met. It was fair day, and he met drovers and chatted to them about the cattle, and he heard a wonderful story about a heifer that one of them had sold, and that found her way back home again, twenty-five miles. . . . A little farther on a man came across the fields toward him, with a sheep dog at his heels, a beautiful bitch who showed her teeth so prettily when she was spoken to; she had long gold hair, and it was easy to see that she liked to be admired.

"They're all alike, the feminine sex," the priest thought. "She's as pretty as Rose, and acts very much the same."

And he trudged on again, amused by the playful sunlight dancing in and out of the underwoods. He heard many stories. One was about a poacher who hadn't slept in a bed for years; who lived out in the heather and in the woods, and trapped rabbits, and beat people when he met them. Sometimes he enticed them far away, and then turned upon them savagely. He came upon a cart filled with pigs which had broken down, and the pigs escaped in all directions into a young plantation, and the efforts of a great number of country people were directed to collecting them. Father Oliver helped in the chase, and at last he saw them driven along the road, for it had been found impossible to mend the cart.

But the moment came for him to return home. He thought he would never return at all if he had had any money in his pocket; for a wandering mood was upon him, and he might have just wandered out of the parish. And he imagined that that would be how Father Moran would leave the parish—he would just go on walking without worrying himself with vexatious questions.

The sun was sinking when he found himself back in the woods again; they were silent now—only the cuckoo was heard, and the familiar cry sounded pleasantly from hill to hill. The evening was beautiful, more beautiful than any picture, and so quiet that he thought of some great cathedral nave; but it was far more beautiful than that, for a nave is filled with twilight and incense, whereas this evening was bright and pure. The earth was warm and green and full of the love of the springtime, with nests in every bough, and flowers growing—bluebells and campions and cow parsley; and he admired these flowers more than he had admired them in the morning. Nor had the mountains ever seemed so beautiful as they seemed now; he could follow every crest and valley. Half the beauty of these mountains lay in the fact that they were turned hither and thither, and not seen in profile.

In the sky a lake was forming, the very image and likeness to the lake under the hill. One glittered like silver, the other like gold, and so wonderful was this celestial lake that he began to think of immortals, of an assembly of goddesses waiting for their gods, or a goddess waiting on an island for some mortal, sending bird

messengers to him. A sort of pagan enchantment was put upon him, and he rose up from the ferns to see an evening as fair as Rose and as fragrant. He tried to think of the color of her eyes, which were fervid and oracular, and of her hands, which were long and sweet and curved, and of her breath, which was fragrant. The evening was like her, as subtle and as persuasive, and the sensation of her presence was so clear that he shut his eyes, feeling her about him—as near to him as if she lay in his arms, just as he had felt her that night in the wood, only then she was colder and more remote. He walked along the shore feeling like an instrument that had been tuned. His perception seemed to have been indefinitely increased, and it seemed to him as if he were in communion with the stones in the earth and the clouds in heaven; it seemed to him as if the past and the future had become one.

The moment was one of extraordinary sweetness; never might such a moment happen in his life again. The earth and sky were enfolding in one tender harmony of rose and blue, the blue shading down to gray, and the lake floated amid vague shores, vaguely as a dream floats through sleep. The swallows were flying high, quivering overhead in the blue air. There was a sense of security and persuasion and loveliness in the evening.

XV

From Father Oliver Gogarty to Miss Rose Leicester.

"Garranard, Bohola,
"May 18, 19—.

THOUGHTS are rising up in my mind, and I am eager to write them down quickly, and with as little consideration as possible. Perhaps my thoughts will seem trivial when I have written them, but the emotion that inspired them was very wonderful and overpowering. I am, as it were, propelled to my writing table. I must write: my emotion must find expression. Even if I were sure you would not get this letter for months, I should write it. I believe if I knew you would never get it I should write. But if I send it to Ethelstone Manor it will be forwarded, I suppose, for you will not remain whole months without hearing from Europe. . . . In any case, you will get this letter on your return, and it will ease my heart to write it. Above all things, I would have you know that the report that I was drowned while bathing is not true. A report to this effect will certainly find its way into the local papers, and in these days, once a piece of news gets reported, it flies along from newspaper to newspaper, and newspapers have a knack of straying into our hands when they contain a disagreeable item of news.

"You will remember how the interview with Mr. Ellis, published in *Illustrated England,* came into my hands. That number was the first of *Illustrated England* I had seen. My curate brought it here and left it upon the table, and only the fate that is over us knows why. In the same way, a paper containing a report of my supposed drowning may reach you when you return to England, and, as I do not want you to think that I have gone out of this life, I am writing to tell you that the report of my death is untrue, or, to speak more exactly, it will not be true, if my arms and legs can make it a false report. These lines will set you wondering if I have taken leave of my senses. Read on, and my sanity will become manifest. Some day next month I intend to swim across the lake, and you will, I think, appreciate this adventure. You praised my decision not to leave my parish because of the pain it would give the poor people. You said that you liked me better for it, and it is just because my resolve has not wavered that I have decided to swim across the lake. Only in this way can I quit my parish without leaving a scandalous name behind me. Moreover, the means whereby I was enlightened are so strange that I find it difficult to believe that Providence is not on my side.

"Have not men always believed in bird augury from the beginning of time? and have not prognostications a knack of coming true? I feel sure that you would think as I do if what had happened to me had happened to you. Yet when you read this letter you will say, 'No sooner has he disentangled himself from one superstition

than he drops into another!' However this may be, I cannot get it out of my head that this strangely ill-fated bird that came out of the wood last February was sent for a purpose. But I have not told you about that bird. In my last letter my mind was occupied by other things, and there was no reason why I should have mentioned it, for it seemed at the time merely a curious accident—no more curious than the hundred and one accidents that happen every day. I believe these things are called coincidences. But to the story. The day I went out skating there was a shooting party in Derrinrush, and at the close of day, in the dusk, a bird got up from the sedge, and one of the shooters, mistaking it for a woodcock, fired, wounding the bird.

"We watched it till we saw it fall on the shore of Castle Island, and, thinking that it would linger there for days, dying by inches, I started off with the intention of putting it out of its misery. The bird I found on the rocks was but a heap of skin and feathers, and no wonder, for its legs were firmly tied together with a piece of stout string, twisted and tied so that it would last for years. There was no possibility of the bird getting free from its fetter. Who had ever heard of a curlew with its legs tied together? From long pondering whether it was a tame bird that had escaped from captivity, or whether it had fallen into a fowler's net and been let loose after its legs had been tied together from sheer love of cruelty, this strangely fated curlew came to occupy a sort of symbolic relation toward my past and my future life, and it was in thinking of it that the idea

occurred to me that, if I could cross the lake on the ice, I might swim it in the summer time when the weather was warm, having, of course, hidden a bundle of clothes amid the rocks on the Joycetown side. My clerical clothes will be found on this side, and the assumption will be, of course, that I swam out too far.

"This way of escape seemed at first fantastic and unreal, but it has come to seem to me the only practical way out of my difficulty. In no other way can I leave the parish without giving pain to the poor people, who have been very good to me. And you, who appreciated my scruples on this point, will, I am sure, understand the great pain it would give my sisters if I were to leave the Church. It would give them so much pain that I shrink from trying to imagine what it would be. They would look upon themselves as disgraced, and they would think that I had disgraced the whole family. My disappearance from the parish would even do them harm—Eliza's school would suffer. This may seem an exaggeration, but certainly Eliza would never quite get over it. If this way of escape had not been revealed to me, I don't think I ever should have found courage to leave, and if I didn't leave I should die. Life is so ordered that a trace remains of every act, but the trace is not always discovered, and I trust you implicitly. You will never show this letter to anyone; you will never tell anyone.

"The Church would allow me, no doubt, to pick up a living as best I could, and would not interfere with me till I said something or wrote something that the Church thought would lessen its power; then the cry of un-

frocked priest would be raised against me, and calumny, the great ecclesiastical weapon, would be used. I do not know what my future life will be: my past has been so beset with misfortune that, once I get on the other side, I shall never look back. I cannot find words to tell you of the impatience with which I wait the summer time, the fifteenth of July, when the moon will be full. I cannot think what would have happened to me if I had stayed at home the afternoon that the curlew was shot; something would have happened, for we cannot go on always sacrificing ourselves. We can sacrifice ourselves for a time, but we cannot sacrifice ourselves all our life long, unless we begin to take pleasure in the immolation of self, and then it is no longer sacrifice. Something must have happened, or I should have gone mad.

"I had suffered so much in the parish. I think the places in which we have suffered become distasteful to us, and the instinct to wander takes us. A migratory bird goes, or dies of homesickness; home is not always where we are born—it is among ideas that are dear to us: and it is exile to live among people who do not share our ideas. Something must have happened to me. I can think of nothing except suicide or what did happen, for I could never have made up my mind to give pain to the poor people and to leave a scandalous name behind; still less could I continue to administer sacraments that I had ceased to believe in. I can imagine nothing more shameful than the life of a man who continues his administrations after he has ceased to believe in them, especially a Catholic priest, so precise and explicit are the Roman

sacraments. A very abject life it is to murmur 'Absolve te' over the heads of parishioners, and to place wafers on their tongues, when we have ceased to believe that we have power to forgive sins and to turn bread into God. A layman may have doubts, and continue to live his life as before, without troubling to take the world into his confidence, but a priest may not do so. The money an unbelieving priest receives, if he be not inconceivably hardened in sin, must be hateful to him, and his conscience can leave him no rest.

"At first I used to suspect my conversion. It seemed to me unseemly that a man should cease to believe that we must renounce this life in order to gain another, without much preliminary study of the Scriptures, and I began to look upon myself as a somewhat superficial person whose religious beliefs had yielded before the charm of a pretty face and winsome personality. But this view of the question no longer seems superficial. The very contrary seems true. And the superficial ones are those who think that it is only in the Scriptures that we may discover whether we have a right to live. Our belief in books rather than in Nature is one of humanity's most curious characteristics, and a very irreligious one, it seems to me; and I am glad to think that it was your sunny face that raised up my crushed instincts, that brought me back to life, and ever since you have been associated in my mind with the sun and the springtide.

"One day in the beginning of March, coming back from a long walk on the hills, I heard the bleat of the lamb and the impatient cawing of the rook that could

not get its nest to hold together in the windy branches, and as I stopped to listen it seemed to me that something passed by in the dusk: the springtide itself seemed to be fleeting across the tillage toward the scant fields. As the springtide advanced I discovered a new likeness to you in the daffodil; it is so shapely a flower. I should be puzzled to give a reason, but it reminds me of antiquity, and you were always a thing divorced from the Christian ideal. While mourning you, my poor instincts discovered you in the wind-shaken trees, and in the gayety of the sun, and the flowers that May gives us. . . . I shall be gone at the end of July, when the carnations are in bloom, but were I here I am sure many of them would remind me of you. There have been saints who have loved Nature, but I always wondered how it was so, for Nature is like a woman. I might have read the Scriptures again and again, and all the arguments that Mr. Ellis can put forward, without my faith having been shaken in the least. When the brain alone thinks, the thinking is very thin and impoverished. It seems to me that the best thinking is done when the whole man thinks, the flesh and the brain together, and for the whole man to think the whole man must live; and the life I have lived hitherto has been a thin life, for only my body lived. And not even all my body. My mind and body had been separated; neither were of any use to me. I owe everything to you. My case cannot be defined merely as that of a priest who gave up his religion because a pretty woman came by. He who says that does not try to understand; he merely contents himself with uttering

facile commonplace. What he has to learn is the great oneness in Nature. There is but one element, and we but one of its many manifestations. If this were not so, why should your whiteness and color and gayety remind me always of the springtime?

"My pen is running fast, I hardly know what I am writing, but it seems to me that I am beginning to see much clearer. The mists are dissolving, and life emerges like the world at daybreak. I am thinking now of an old, decrepit house with sagging roof and lichen-covered walls, and all the doors and windows nailed up. Every generation nailed up a door or a window till all were nailed up. In the dusty twilight creatures wilt and pray. About the house the doleful sound of shutters creaking on rusty hinges never ceases. Your hand touched one, it fell, and I found myself looking upon the splendid sun shining on hills and fields, wooded prospects with rivers winding through the great green expanses. At first I dared not look, and withdrew into the shadow tremblingly; but the light drew me forth again, and now I look upon the world without fear. I am going to leave that decrepit, dusty house and mix with my fellows, and maybe blow a horn on the hillside to call comrades together. My hands and eyes are eager to know what I have become possessed of. I owe to you my liberation from prejudices and conventions. Ideas are passed on. We learn more from each other than from books. I was unconsciously affected by your example. You dared to stretch out both hands to life and grasp it; you accepted the spontaneous natural living wisdom of your

instincts when I was rolled up like a dormouse in the dead wisdom of codes and formulas, dogmas and opinions. I never told you how I became a priest. I did not know until quite lately. I think I began to suspect my vocation when you left the parish.

"I remember walking along the lake just this time last year, and the story of my life was singing in my head, and you were in the background of it all, beating the time. You know, we had a shop in Tinnick, and I had seen my father standing before a high desk by a dusty window year after year, selling half-pounds of tea, and hanks of onions, and farm implements, and if I had married my cousin Annie McGrath our lives would have reproduced those of my father and mother in every detail, and I felt I really could not undertake the job. For a long time I did not know why; I was pious, but I can see now that it was not my piety that sent me to Maynooth, but a certain spirit of adventure, a dislike of the commonplace, of the prosaic—that is to say, of the repetition of the same things. I was interested in myself, in my own soul, and I did not want to accept something that was outside of myself, such as the life of a shopman behind a counter, or that of a clerk of the petty sessions, or the habit of a policeman. These were the careers that were open to me, and when I was hesitating, wondering if I should be able to buy up the old mills and revive the trade in Tinnick, my sister Eliza reminded me that there had always been a priest in the family. And the priesthood seemed to offer opportunities of realizing myself, of preserving the spirit

within me. In this I was mistaken; it offered no such opportunities to me. I might as well have become a policeman. . . . Everyone must try to cling to his own soul, to cherish what is inly. And that is the only law, the only binding law I can believe in. If we are here for anything, it is surely for that.

"But one does not free one's self from habits and ideas, that have grown almost inveterate, without much pain and struggle; one falls back many times, and there are always good reasons for following the rut. We believe that the worn way leads us somewhere; in reality it leads us nowhere, the worn way is only a seeming; the mysterious lights of instincts are alone worth following, implicated though they be and zigzag. You say in your letter that our destinies got entangled, and the piece that was being woven ran out into thread, and was rewound upon another spool. It seemed to you and it seemed to me that there was no pattern; we think there is none because Nature's pattern is undistinguishable to our eyes, her looms are so vast, but sometimes even our little sight can follow a design here and there. And does it not seem to you that, after all, there was some design in what has happened? You came and released me from conventions, just as the spring releases the world from winter rust.

"A strange idea has come into my mind, and I cannot help smiling at the topsy-turvydom of Nature, or what seems to be topsy-turvydom. You, who began by living in your instincts, are now wandering beyond Palestine in search of scrolls; and I, who began my life in scrolls, am

now going to try to pick up the lost thread of my instincts in some great commercial town, in London or New York. My life for a long time will be that of some poor clerk or some hack journalist, picking up thirty shillings a week when he is in luck. I imagine myself in a threadbare suit of clothes edging my way along the pavement, nearing a great building, and making my way to my desk, and, when the day's work is done, returning home along the same pavement to a room high up among the rafters, close to the sky, in some cheap quarter.

"I do not doubt my ability to pick up a living—it will be a shameful thing indeed if I cannot; for the poor curlew with its legs tied together managed to live somehow, and cannot I do as much? And I have taken care that no fetters shall be placed upon my legs or chain about my neck. Anything may happen—life is full of possibilities—but my first concern must be how I may earn my living. To earn one's living is an obligation that can only be dispensed with at one's own great risk. What may happen afterwards Heaven knows! I may meet you, or I may meet another woman, or I may remain unmarried. I do not intend to allow myself to think of these things; my thoughts are set on one thing only—how to get to New York, and how I shall pick up a living when I get there. Again I thank you for what you have done for me, for the liberation you have brought me of body and mind. I need not have added the words 'body and mind,' for these are not two things, but one thing. And that is the lesson I have learned. Good-by.

OLIVER GOGARTY."

XVI

IT would be a full moon on the fifteenth of July, and every night he went out on the hillside to watch the horned moon swelling to a disk.

And on the fifteenth, the day he had settled for his departure, as he sat thinking how he would go down to the lake in a few hours, he remembered the last letter he had written to her. As well as he could remember, he had written her a foolish, vainglorious letter —a stupid letter that made him appear like a fool in her eyes. Had he not said something about— The thought eluded him; he could only remember the general tone of his letter, and in it seemed to consider Rose as a sort of medicine—a cure for religion.

He should have written her a simple little letter, telling her that he was leaving Ireland because he had suffered a great deal, and would write to her from New York, whereas he had written her the letter of a booby. And feeling he must do something to rectify his mistake, he went to his writing table, but he had hardly put the pen to the paper when he heard a step on the gravel outside his door.

"Father Moran, your reverence."

"I see that I'm interrupting you. You're writing."

"No, I assure you."

"But you've got a pen in your hand."

"It can wait—a matter of no importance. Sit down."

"Now, you'll tell me if I'm in the way?"

"My good man, why are you talking like that? Why should you be in the way?"

"Well, if you're sure you've nothing to do, may I stay to supper?"

"To supper?"

"But I see that I'm in the way."

"No; I tell you you're not in the way. And you're going to stay to supper."

Father Oliver flung himself between Father Moran and the door; Father Moran allowed himself to be led back to the armchair. Father Oliver took the chair opposite him, for he couldn't send Moran away; he mustn't do anything that would give rise to suspicion.

"You're quite sure I'm not in the way—I'm not interfering with any plans?"

"Quite sure. I'm glad you have come this evening."

"Are you? . . . Well, I had to come."

"You had to come!"

"Yes, I had to come; I had to come to see if anything had happened. You needn't look at me like that; I haven't been drinking, and I haven't gone out of my mind. I can only tell you that I had to come to see you this evening."

"And you don't know why?"

"No, I don't; I can't tell you exactly why I've come. As I was reading my breviary, walking up and down the road in front of the house, I felt that I must see you.

I never felt anything like it in my life before. I had to come."

"And you didn't expect to find me?"

"Well, I didn't. How did you guess that?"

"You'd have hardly come all that way to find me sitting here in this armchair."

"That's right. It wasn't sitting in that chair I expected to see you; I didn't expect to see you at all—at least, I don't think I did. You see, it was all very queer, for it was as if somebody had got me by the shoulders. It was as if I were being pushed every yard of the road. Something was running in my mind that I shouldn't see you again, or if I did see you that it would be for the last time. You seemed to me as if you were going away on a long journey."

"Was it dying or dead you saw me?"

"That I can't say. If I said any more I shouldn't be telling the truth. No, it wasn't the same feeling when I came to tell you I couldn't put up with the loneliness any more—the night I came here roaring for drink. I was thinking of myself then, and that you might save me or do something for me—give me drink or cure me. I don't know which thought it was that was running in my head, but I had to come to you all the same, just as I had to come to you to-day. I say it was different, because then I was on my own business; but this time it seemed to me that I was on yours. One good turn deserves another, as they say; and something was beating in my head that I could help you, serve as a stay; so I had to come. Where should I be now if it were not for

you? I can see you're thinking that it was only nonsense that was running in my head, but you won't be saying it was nonsense that brought me the night I came like a madman roaring for drink. If there was a miracle that night, why shouldn't there be a miracle to-night? And if a miracle ever happened in the world, it happened that night, I'm thinking. Do you remember the dark-gray clouds tearing across the sky, and we walking side by side, I trying to get away from you? I was that mad that I might have thrown you into the bog hole if the craving had not passed from me. And it was just lifted from me as one might take the cap off one's head. You remember the prayer we said, leaning over the bit of wall looking across the bog? There was no lonesomeness that night coming home, Gogarty, though a curlew might have felt a bit."

"A curlew!"

"Well, there were curlews and plovers about, and a starving ass picking grass between the road and the bog hole. That night will be ever in my mind. Where would I be now if it hadn't been that you kept on with me and brought me back, cured? It wouldn't be a cassock that would be on my back, but some old rag of a coat. There's nothing in this world, Gogarty, more unlucky than a suspended priest. I think I can see myself in the streets, hanging about some public house, holding horses attached to a cab-rank."

"Lord of Heaven, Moran! what are you coming here to talk to me in this way for? The night you're speaking of was bad enough, but your memory of it is worse.

Nothing of what you're saying would have happened; a man like you would be always able to pick up a living."

"And where would I be picking up a living if it weren't on a cab-rank, or you either?"

"Well, 'tis melancholy enough you are this evening."

"And all for nothing, for there you are, sitting in your old chair. I see I've made a fool of myself."

"That don't matter. You see, if one didn't do what one felt like doing, one would have remorse of conscience forever after."

"I suppose so. It was very kind of you, Moran, to come all this way."

"What is it but a step? Three miles——"

"And a half."

Moved by a febrile impatience, which he could not control, Father Oliver got up from his chair.

"Now, Moran, isn't it strange? I wonder how it was that you should have come to tell me that you were going off to drink somewhere. You said you were going to lie up in a public house and drink for days, and yet you didn't think of giving up the priesthood."

"What are you saying, Gogarty? Don't you know well enough I'd have been suspended? Didn't I tell you that drink had taken that power over me that, if roaring hell were open, and I sitting on the brink of it and a table beside me with whisky on it, I should fill myself a glass?"

"And knowing you were going down to hell?"

"Yes, that night nothing would have stopped me.

But, talking of hell, I heard a good story yesterday. Pat Carabine was telling his flock last Sunday of the tortures of the damned, and having said all he could about devils and pitchforks and caldrons, he came to a sudden pause —a blank look came into his face, and, looking round the church and seeing the sunlight streaming through the door, his thoughts went off at a tangent. 'Now, boys,' he said, 'if this fine weather continues, I hope you'll be all out in the bog next Tuesday bringing home my turf.'"

Father Oliver laughed, but his laughter did not satisfy Father Moran, and he told how on another occasion Father Pat had finished his sermon on hell by telling his parishioners that the devil was the landlord of hell. "And I leave yourself to imagine the groaning that was heard in the church that morning, for weren't they all small tenants? . . . But I'm afraid my visit has upset you, Gogarty."

"How is that?"

"You don't seem to enjoy a laugh like you used to."

"Well, I was thinking at that moment that I've heard you say that, even though you gave way to drink, you never had any doubts about the reality of the hell that awaited you for your sins."

"That's the way it is, Gogarty, one believes, but one doesn't act up to one's belief. Human nature is inconsistent. Nothing is queerer than human nature, and will you be surprised if I tell you that I believe I was a better priest when I was drinking than I am now that I'm sober? I was saying that human nature is very

queer; and it used to seem queer to myself. I looked upon drink as a sort of blackmail I paid to the devil so that he might let me be a good priest in everything else. That's the way it was with me, and there was more sense in the idea than you'd be thinking, for when the drunken fit was over I used to pray as I have never prayed since. If there was not a bit of wickedness in the world, there would be no goodness. And as for faith, drink never does any harm to one's faith whatsoever; there's only one thing that takes a man's faith from him, and that is woman. You remember the expulsions at Maynooth, and you know what they were for. Well, that sin is a bad one, but I don't think it affects a man's faith any more than drink does. It is woman that kills the faith in men."

"I think you're right; woman is the danger. The Church dreads her. Woman is life."

"I don't quite understand you."

Catherine came into the room to lay the cloth, and Father Oliver asked Father Moran to come out into the garden. It was now nearing its prime. In a few days more the carnations would be all in bloom, and Father Oliver reflected that very soon it would begin to look neglected. In a year or two it would have drifted back to the original wilderness, "to briar and weed," he said to himself; and he began to think how he loved this tiny plot of ground, with a wide path running down the center, flower borders on each side, and a narrow path round the garden beside the hedge. The potato ridges and the runners and the cabbages came in the middle. Gooseberry bushes and currant bushes grew thickly, there were

little apple trees here and there, and in one corner the two large apple trees under which he sat and smoked his pipe in the evenings.

"You're very snug here, smoking your pipe under your apple trees."

"Yes, in a way; but I think I was happier where you are."

"The past is always pleasant to look upon."

"You think so?"

The priests walked to the end of the garden, and, leaning on the wicket, Father Moran said:

"We've had queer weather lately—dull, heavy weather. See how low the swallows are flying. When I came up the drive, the gravel space in front of the house was covered with them, the old birds feeding the young ones."

"And you were noticing these things, and believing that Providence had sent you here to bid me good-by."

"Isn't it when the nerves are on a stretch that we notice little things that don't concern us at all?"

"Yes, Moran; you are right. I've never known you as wise as you are this evening."

Catherine appeared in the kitchen door. She had come to tell them their supper was ready. During the meal the conversation turned on the roofing of the abbey and the price of timber, and when the tablecloth had been removed the conversation swayed between the price of building materials and the archbishop's fears lest he should meet a violent death, as it had been prophesied if he allowed a roof to be put upon Kilronan.

"You know I don't altogether blame him, and I don't think anyone does at the bottom of his heart, for what has been foretold, generally comes to pass sooner or later."

"The archbishop is a good Catholic who believes in everything the Church teaches—in the Divinity of Our Lord, the Immaculate Conception, and the Pope's indulgences. And why should he be disbelieving in that which has been prophesied for generations about the abbot of Kilronan?"

"Don't you believe in these things?"

"Does anyone know exactly what he believes? Does the archbishop really believe every day of the year and every hour of every day that the abbot of Kilronan will be slain on the highroad when a De Stanton is again abbot?" Father Oliver was thinking of the slip of the tongue he had been guilty of before supper, when he said that the Church looks upon woman as the real danger, because she is the life of the world. He shouldn't have made that remark, for it might be remembered against him, and he fell to thinking of something to say that would explain it away.

"Well, Moran, we've had a pleasant evening; we've talked a good deal, and you've said many pleasant things and many wise ones. We've never had a talk that I enjoyed more, and I shall not forget it easily."

"How is that?"

"Didn't you say that it isn't drink that destroys a man's faith, but woman? And you said rightly, for woman is life."

"I was just about to ask you what you meant, when Catherine came in and interrupted us."

"Love of woman means estrangement from the Church, because you have to protect her and her children."

"Yes, that is so; that's how it works out. Now, you won't be thinking me a fool for having come to see you this evening, Gogarty? One never knows when one's impulses are true and when they're false. If I hadn't come the night when the drink craving was upon me, I shouldn't have been here now."

"You did quite right to come, Moran; we've talked of a great many things."

"I've never talked so plainly to anyone before; I wonder what made me talk as I've been talking. We never talked like this before, did we, Gogarty? And I wouldn't have talked to another as I've talked to you. I shall never forget what I owe to you."

"You said you were going to leave the parish."

"I don't think I thought of anything except to burn myself up with drink. I wanted to forget, and I saw myself walking ahead, day after day, drinking at every public house."

"And just because I saved you, you thought you would come to save me?"

"There was something of that in it. Gad! it's very queer; there's no saying where things will begin and end. Pass me the tobacco, will you?"

Father Moran began to fill his pipe, and when he had finished filling it, he said:

"Now I must be going, and don't be trying to keep me; I've stopped long enough. If I were sent for a purpose——"

"But you don't believe seriously, Moran, that you were sent for a purpose?" Moran didn't answer, and his silence irritated Father Oliver, and, determined to probe his curate's conscience, he said: "Aren't you satisfied now that it was only an idea of your own? You thought to find me gone, and here I am sitting before you." After waiting for some time for Moran to speak, he said: "You haven't answered me."

"What should I be answering?"

"Do you still think you were sent for a purpose?"

"Well, I do."

"You do?"

The priests stood looking at each other for a while.

"Can't you give a reason?"

"No; I can give no reason. It's a feeling. I know I haven't reason on my side. There you are before me."

"It's very queer."

He would have liked to have called back Moran. It seemed a pity to let him go without having probed this matter to the bottom. He hadn't asked him if he had any idea in his mind about the future, as to what was going to happen; but it was too late now. "Why did he come here disturbing me with his beliefs," he cried out, "poisoning my will?" for he had already begun to fear that Moran's visit might come between him and his project. The wind sighed a little louder, and Father

Oliver said: "I wouldn't be minding his coming here to warn me, though he did say that it wasn't of his own will that he came, but something from the outside that kept pushing him along the road—I wouldn't be minding all that if this wind hadn't risen. . . . The omen is a double one." At that moment the wind shook the trees about the house, and he fell to thinking that if he had started to swim the lake that night he would be now somewhere between Castle Island and the Joycetown shore, in the deepest and windiest part of the lake. "And pretty well tired I'd be at the time. If I'd started to-night a corpse would be floating about by now." The wind grew louder. Father Oliver imagined the waves slapping in his face, and then he imagined them slapping about the face of a corpse drifting toward the Joycetown shore.

XVII

HE slept lightly that night, waking many times; and, standing by his window, he watched the trees shaking, and, going back to bed, he hoped he would sleep. Sleep came quickly, but with dreams—not dreams of drowning men, but of books and newspapers. He heard music in his dreams—there was talk of illegitimate children. As he dressed himself he criticised his dreams as the incoherent babble of the different events of the last two years. On the whole his dreams were not discouraging. "If I had dreamed of drowning men I might never have the courage to go. Even so I should have gone. Anything were better than to remain taking money from poor people, playing the part of a hypocrite. Better, no doubt," he said, "for there is always a question of courage, and man's courage is precarious." And, anxious to see what the lake was like, he went out after breakfast, telling Catherine he could not look through her accounts that morning.

"Boisterous enough," he said. "No swimmer would be able to get across to-day nor to-night, even if the wind drops in the afternoon."

The wind rose during the night, and next day he could only see white waves, tossing trees, and clouds

tumbling over the mountains. As he sat alone in his study staring at the lamp, the wind often awoke him from his reverie, and one night he remembered suddenly that it was no longer possible for him to cross the lake that month, even if the wind should cease, for he required not only a calm, but a moonlight night. And going out of the house, he walked about the hilltop, about the old thorn bush, his hands clasped behind his back. And he stood watching the moon setting low down on the south-western horizon. The lake—where was it? Had he not known that a lake was there he would hardly have been able to discover one. All faint traces of one had disappeared. Next night every shape was lost in blue shadow, and he wondered if his desire to go had gone with the lake. "The lake will return," he said, and next night he was on the hillside waiting for the new moon. And every night the lake emerged from the shadow, growing clearer, till he could follow its every shore. "In a few days I shall be swimming out there if this weather lasts." The thought crossed his mind that if the wind should rise again about the time of the full moon he would not be able to cross that year, for in September the water would be too cold for so long a swim. "But it isn't likely," he said; "the weather seems settled."

And the same close, blue weather that had prevailed before the storm returned, the same diffused sunlight.

"There is nothing so depressing," the priest said, "as seeing swallows flying a few feet from the ground."

It was about eight o'clock—the day had begun to

droop in his garden—that he walked up and down the beds admiring his carnations. Every now and again the swallows collected into groups of some six or seven, and fled round the gables of his house shrieking. "This is their dinner hour; the moths are about." He wandered on, thinking Rose lacking; for she had never appreciated that beautiful flower, Miss Shifner. But her ear was finer than his; she found her delight in music.

A thought broke through his memories. He had forgotten to tell her he would write if he succeeded in crossing the lake, and if he didn't write she would never know whether he was living or dead. Perhaps it would be better so. After hesitating a moment, the desire to write to her took strong hold upon him, and he sought an excuse for writing. If he didn't write she might think that he remained in Garranard. She knew nothing of Moran's visit, nor of the rising of the wind, nor of the waning of the moon; and he must write to her about these things, for if he were drowned she would think that God had willed it. But if he believed in God's intervention, he should stay in his parish and pray that grace might be given to him. "God doesn't bother Himself about such trifles as my staying or my going," he muttered as he hastened toward his house, overcome by an immense joy. For he was only really happy when he was thinking of her, or doing something connected with her, and to tell her of the fatality that seemed to pursue him would occupy an evening.

From Father Oliver Gogarty to Miss Rose Leicester.

"GARRANARD, BOHOLA,
"July 25, 19—.

"You will be surprised to hear from me so soon again, but I forgot to say in my last letter that, if I succeeded in crossing the lake, I would write to you from New York. And since then many things have happened, strange and significant coincidences."

And when he had related the circumstance of Father Moran's visit and the storm, he sought to excuse his half-beliefs that these were part of God's providence sent to warn him against leaving his parish.

"Only time can rid us of ideas that have been implanted in us in our youth, and that have grown up in our flesh and in our mind. A sudden influence may impel us to tear them up and cast them aside, but the seed is in us always, and it grows again. 'One year's seed, seven years' weed.' And behind imported Palestinian supernature, if I may be permitted to drop into Mr. Ellis's style, or what I imagine to be his style, there is the home belief in fairies, spirits, and ghosts, and the reading of omens. Who among us does not remember the old nurse who told him stories of magic and witchcraft? Nor can it be denied that things happen that seem in contradiction to all we know of Nature's laws. Moreover, these unusual occurrences have a knack of hap-

pening to men at the moment of their setting out on some irrevocable enterprise.

"You who are so sympathetic will understand how my will has been affected by Father Moran's visit. Had you heard him tell how he had been propelled, as it were, out of his house toward me, you, too, would believe that he were a messenger. He stopped on his threshold to try to find a reason for coming to see me; he couldn't find any, and he walked on, feeling that something had happened. He must have thought himself a fool when he found me sitting here in the thick flesh. But what he said did not seem nonsense to me; it seemed like some immortal wisdom come from another world. . . . Remember that I was on the point of going. Nor is this all. If nothing else had happened, I might have looked upon Father Moran's visit as a coincidence. But why should the wind rise? So far as I can make out, it began to rise between eleven and twelve, at the very time I should have been swimming between Castle Island and the Joycetown shore. I know that belief in signs and omens and prognostics can be laughed at; nothing is more ridiculous than the belief that man's fate is governed by the flight of birds, yet men have believed in bird augury from the beginning of the world.

"I wrote to you about a curlew (I can still see it in the air, its beautifully shapen body and wings, its long beak, and its trailing legs; it staggered a little in its flight when the shot had been fired, but it had strength enough to reach Castle Island; it then toppled over, falling dead on the shore); and I ask you if it is wonderful

that I should have been impressed? Such a thing was never heard of before—a wild bird with its legs tied together!

"At first I believed that this bird had been sent to warn me from going, but it was that bird that put the idea into my head how I might escape from the parish without giving scandal. Life is so strange that one doesn't know what to think. Of what use are signs and omens if the interpretation is always obscure? They merely wring the will out of us; and well we may ask, Who would care for his life if he knew he was going to lose it on the morrow? And what mother would love her children if she were certain they would fall into evil ways, or if she believed the soothsayers who told her that her children would oppose her ideas? She might love them independent of their opposition, but how could she love them if she knew they were only born to do wrong? Volumes have been written on the subject of predestination and free will, and the truth is that it is as impossible to believe in one as in the other. Nevertheless, prognostications have a knack of coming true, and if I am drowned crossing the lake you will be convinced of the truth of omens. Perhaps I should not write you these things, but the truth is, I cannot help myself; there is no power of resistance in me. I do not know if I am well or ill; my brain is on fire, and I go on thinking and thinking, trying to arrive at some rational belief, but never succeeding. Sometimes I think of myself as a fly on a window pane, crawling and buzzing, and crawling and buzzing again, and so on and so on. . . .

"You are one of those who seem to have been born without much interest in religion or fear of the hereafter, and in a way I am like you, but with a difference: I acquiesced in early childhood, and accepted traditional beliefs, and tried to find happiness in the familiar rather than in the unknown. Whether I should have found the familiar sufficient if I hadn't met you I shall never know. I've thought a good deal on this subject, and it has come to seem to me that we are too much in the habit of thinking of the intellect and the flesh as separate things, whereas they are but one thing. I could write a great deal on this subject, but I stop, as it were, on the threshold of my thought, for this is no time for philosophical writing. I am all a-tremble, and though my brain is working quickly, my thoughts are not mature and deliberate. My brain reminds me at times of the skies that followed Father Moran's visit—skies restlessly flowing, always different and always the same. These last days are merciless days, and I have to write to you in order to get some respite from purposeless thinking. Sometimes I stop in my walk to ask myself who I am and what I am, and where I am going. Will you be shocked to hear that, when I awoke and heard the wind howling, I nearly got out of bed to pray to God, to thank Him for having sent Moran to warn me from crossing the lake? I think I did say a prayer, thanking Him for His mercy. Then I felt that I should pray to Him for grace that I might remain at home and be a good priest always, but that prayer I couldn't formulate, and I suffered a great deal. I know that such vacillations between belief and

unbelief are neither profitable nor admirable; I know that to pray to God to thank Him for having saved me from death while in mortal sin, and yet to find myself unable to pray to Him to do His will, is illogical, and I confess that my fear is now lest old beliefs will claim me before the time comes. A poor, weak, tried mortal man am I, but being what I am I cannot be different. I am calm enough now, and it seems as if my sufferings were at an end; but to-morrow some new fear will rise up like mist, and I shall be enveloped. What an awful thing it would be if I should find myself without will on the fifteenth, or the sixteenth, or the seventeenth of August! If the wind should rise again, and the lake be windy while the moon is full, my chance for leaving here this summer will be at an end. The water will be too cold in September.

"And now you know all, and if you don't get a letter from New York, understand that what appears in the newspaper is true—that I was drowned while bathing. I needn't apologize for this long letter; you will understand that the writing of it has taken me out of myself, and that is a great gain. There is no one else to whom I can write, and it pleases me to know this. I am sorry for my sisters in the convent; they will believe me dead. I have a brother in America, the one who sent the harmonium that you used to play on so beautifully. He will believe in my death, unless we meet in America, and that is not likely. I look forward to writing to you from New York.

"Oliver Gogarty."

Two evenings were passed pleasantly on the composition and the copying of this letter, and, not daring to intrust it to the postboy, he took it himself to Bohola; and he measured the time carefully, so as to get there a few minutes before the postmistress sealed up the bag. He delayed in the office till she had sealed it, and returned home, following the letter in imagination to Dublin, across the Channel to Ethelstone Manor; he calculated its arrival, the servant in charge who would redirect it. His thoughts were at ramble, and they followed the steamer down the coast of Asia Minor. It would lie in the post office at Jerusalem or some frontier town, or maybe a dragoman attached to some Turkish caravansary would take charge of it, and it might reach Rose by caravan. She might read it in the waste. Or maybe it would have been better if he had written "Not to be forwarded" on the envelope. But the servant at Ethelstone Manor would know what to do, and he returned home smiling, unable to believe in himself or in anything else, so extraordinary did it seem to him that he should be writing to Rose Leicester, who was going in search of the Christian river, while he was planning a journey westward.

A few days more, and the day of departure was almost at hand; but it seemed a very long time coming. And what he needed was a material occupation; he spent hours in his garden watering and weeding, and at gaze in front of a bed of fiery cross. Was its scarlet not finer than Lady Hindlip? Lady Hindlip, like fiery cross, is

scentless, and not so hardy. No white carnation compares with Shiela; but her calyx often bursts, and he considered the claims of an old pink-flaked clove carnation, striped like a French brocade. But it straggled a little in growth, and he decided that for hardness he must give the verdict to Raby Castle. True that everyone grows Raby Castle, but no carnation is so hardy or flowers so freely. As he stood admiring her great trusses of bloom among the tea roses, he remembered suddenly that it was his love of flowers that had brought him to Garranard. If he hadn't come to this parish he wouldn't have known her. And if he hadn't known her, he wouldn't have been himself. He owed his life to these flowers.

His brain would not cease thinking; his bodily life seemed to have dissipated, and he seemed to himself like a pure mentality. He seemed to tremble in his very entrails, and, glad to interest himself in the business of the parish, he listened with greater attention than he had ever listened before to the complaints that were brought to him—to the man who had failed to give up a piece of land that he had promised to include in his daughter's fortune, and to Patsy Murphy, who had come to tell him that his house had been broken into while he was away in Tinnick. The old man had spent the winter in Tinnick with some relations, for the house that the colonel had given him permission to build at the edge of the lake had proved too cold for a winter residence.

Patsy seemed to have grown older since the autumn; he seemed like a doll out of which the sawdust was running, a poor shaking thing—a large head afloat on a

weak neck. Tresses of white hair hung on his shoulders, and his watery eyes were red and restless like a ferret's. He opened his mouth, and there were two teeth on either side like tusks. Gray stubble covered his face, and he wore a brown suit, the trousers retained about his pot-belly—all that remained of his body—by a scarf. There was some limp linen and a red muffler about his throat. He spoke of his age—he was ninety-five—and the priest said he was a fine-looking, hearty man for his years. There wasn't a doubt but he'd pass the hundred. Patsy was inclined to believe he would go to one hundred and one; for he had been told in a vision he would go as far as that.

"You see, living in the house alone the brain empties and the vision comes."

That was how he explained his belief as he flopped along by the priest's side, his head shaking and his tongue going, telling tales of all kinds, half-remembered things: how the Gormleys and the Actons had driven the colonel out of the country, and dispersed all his family with their goings-on. That was why they didn't want him—he knew too much about them. And he told a strange story—how they had frightened the colonel's mother by tying a horsehair to the knocker of the hall door, and at the end of the horsehair a tame hare. Whenever the hare moved a rapping was heard at the front door. But nobody could discover the horsehair, and the rapping was attributed to a family ghost.

He seemed to have forgotten his sword, and was now inclined to talk of his fists, and he stopped the priest

in the middle of the road to tell a long tale how once, in Liverpool, some one had spoken against the colonel, and, holding up his clinched fist, he said that no one ever escaped alive from the fist of Patsy Murphy.

It was a trial to listen to him, for one could not help thinking that to become like him it was only necessary to live as long as he. And it was difficult to get rid of the old fellow. He followed the priest as far as the village, and would have followed him farther if Mrs. Egan were not standing there waiting for Father Oliver —a delicate-featured woman with a thin aquiline nose, who was still good-looking, though her age was apparent. She was forty-five, or perhaps fifty, and she held her daughter's baby in her coarse peasant hands. Since the birth of the child a dispute had been raging between the two mothers-in-law; the whole village was talking, and wondering what was going to happen next.

Mrs. Egan's daughter had married a soldier, a Protestant, some two years ago, a man called Rean. Father Oliver had always found him a straightforward fellow, who, although he would not give up his own religion, never tried to interfere with his wife's; he always said that if Mary liked she could bring up her children Catholics. But hitherto they had not been blessed with children, and Mary had been jeered at more than once, the people saying that her barrenness was a punishment sent by God. At last a child had been given them, and all would have gone well if Rean's mother had not come to Garranard for her daughter-in-law's confinement. Being a black Protestant, she wouldn't hear of the child being

brought up a Catholic or even baptized in a Catholic church. And the child was now a week old. Rean was fairly distracted, for neither his own mother nor his mother-in-law would give way; each was trying to outdo the other. Mrs. Rean watched Mrs. Egan, and Mrs. Egan watched Mrs. Rean, and the poor mother lay all day with the baby at her breast, listening to the two of them quarreling.

"She's gone behind the hedge for a minute, your reverence, so I whipped the child out of me daughter's bed; and if your reverence would only hurry up we could have the poor cratur baptized in the Holy Faith. Only there's no time to be lost; she do be watchin' every stir, your reverence."

"Very well, Mrs. Egan; I'll be waiting for you up at the chapel."

"A strange rusticity of mind," he said to himself as he wended his way along the village street. Nor at the chapel gate could he help laughing, for he couldn't help thinking how Mrs. Rean the elder would rage when the child was brought back to her a Catholic. So this was going to be his last priestly act, the baptism of the child, the saving of the child to the Holy Faith. He told Mike to get the things ready, and turned into the sacristy to put on his surplice.

The familiar presses gave out a pleasant odor, and the vestments which he might never wear again interested him, and he stood seemingly lost in thought. "But I mustn't keep the child waiting," he said, waking up suddenly; and coming out of the sacristy, he found twenty

villagers collected round the font. They had come up from the cottages to see the child baptized in the holy religion.

"Where's the child, Mrs. Egan?"

The group began talking suddenly, trying to make plain to him what had happened.

"Now, if you all talk together, I shall never understand."

"Will you leave off pushing me?" said one.

"Wasn't it I that saw Patsy? Will your reverence listen to me?" said Mrs. Egan. "It was just as I was telling your reverence, if they'd be letting me alone. Your reverence had only just turned in the chapel gate when Mrs. Rean ran from behind the hedge, and, getting in front of me who was going to the chapel with the baby in me arms, she said: 'Now, I'll be damned if I'll have that child christened a Catholic'; and didn't she snatch the child and run away, taking a short cut across the fields to the minister's?"

"Patsy Kivel has gone after her, and he'll catch up on her, surely, and she with six ditches forninst her."

"If he doesn't itself, maybe the minister isn't there, and then she'll be bet."

"All I'm hopin' is that the poor child won't come to any harm between them; but isn't she a fearful, terrible woman, and may the curse of the Son of God be on her for stealin' away a poor child the like of that!"

"I'd cut the livers out of the likes of them."

"Now, will you mind what you're sayin', and the priest listenin' to you?"

"Your reverence, will the child be always a Protestant? Hasn't the holy water of the Church more power in it than the water they have? Don't they only throw it at the child?"

"Now, Mrs. Egan——"

"Ah, your reverence, you're going to say that I shouldn't have given the child to her, and I wouldn't if I hadn't trod on a stone and fallen against the wall, and got afeard the child might be hurt."

"Well, well," said Father Oliver, "you see there's no child——"

"But you'll be waitin' a minute for the sake of the poor child, your reverence? Patsy will be comin' back in a minute."

On that Mrs. Egan went to the chapel door and stood there, so that she might catch the first glimpse of him as he came across the fields. And it was about ten minutes after, when the priest and his parishioners were talking of other things, that Mrs. Egan began to wave her arm, crying out that some one should hurry.

"Will you make haste, and his reverence waitin' here this half-hour to baptize the innocent child! He'll be here in less than a minute now, your reverence. Will you have patience, and the poor child will be safe?"

The child was snatched from Patsy, and so violently that the infant began to cry, and Mrs. Egan didn't know if it was a hurt it had received, for the panting Patsy was unable to answer her.

"The child's all right," he blurted out at last. "She

said I might take it and welcome, now it was a Protestant."

"Ah, sure, you great thickhead of a boy! weren't you quick enough for her?"

"Now, what are you talkin' about? Hadn't she half a mile start of me, and the minister at the door just as I was gettin' over the last bit of a wall!"

"And didn't you go in after them?"

"What would I be doin', goin' into a Protestant church?"

Patsy's sense of his responsibility was discussed violently until Father Oliver said:

"Now, I can't be waiting any longer. Do you want me to baptize the child or not?"

"It would be safer, wouldn't it?" said Mrs. Egan.

"It would," said Father Oliver; "the parson mightn't have said the words while he was pouring the water."

And, going toward the font with the child, Father Oliver took a cup of water, but, having regard for the child's cries, he was a little sparing with it.

"Now, don't be sparin' with the water, your reverence, and don't be mindin' its noise; it's twicest the quantity of holy water it'll be wanting, and it half an hour a Protestant."

It was at that moment Mrs. Rean appeared in the doorway, and Patsy Kivel, who didn't care to enter the Protestant church, rushed to put her out of his.

"You can do what you like now with the child; it's a Protestant, for all your tricks."

"Go along, you old heretic bitch!"

"Now, Patsy, will you behave yourself when you're standing in the church of God! Be leaving the woman alone," said Father Oliver; but before he got to the door to separate the two, Mrs. Rean was running down the chapel yard followed by the crowd of disputants, and he heard the quarrel growing fainter in the village street.

Rose-colored clouds had just begun to appear midway in the pale sky—a beautiful sky, all gray and rose—and all this babble about baptism seemed strangely incongruous. "And to think that men are still seeking scrolls in Turkestan to prove—" The sentence did not finish itself in his mind; a ray of western light falling across the altar steps in the stillness of the church awakened a remembrance in him of the music that Rose's hands drew from the harmonium, and, leaning against the communion rails, he allowed the music to absorb him. He could hear it so distinctly in his mind that he refrained from going up into the gallery and playing it, for in his playing he would perceive how much he had forgotten, how imperfect was his memory. It were better to lose himself in the emotion of the memory of the music; it was in his blood, and he could see her hands playing it, and the music was colored with the memory of her hair and her eyes. His teeth clinched a little as if in pain, and then he feared the enchantment would soon pass away; but the music preserved it longer than he had expected, and it might have lasted still longer if he had not become aware that some one was standing in the doorway.

The feeling had suddenly come over him that he was

not alone; it had been borne in upon him—he knew not how, neither by sight nor sound—through some exceptional sense. Turning toward the sunlit doorway, he saw a poor man standing there, not daring to disturb the priest, thinking, no doubt, that he was engaged in prayer. The poor man was Pat Kearney. So the priest was a little overcome, for that Pat Kearney should come to him at such a time was portentous. "It certainly is strange, coincidence after coincidence," he said; and he stood looking at Pat as if he didn't know him, till the poor man was frightened and began to wonder, for no one had ever looked at him with such interest, not even the neighbor whom he had asked to marry him three weeks ago. And this Pat Kearney, a short, thickset man, sinking into years, began to wonder what new misfortune had tracked him down. His teeth were worn and yellow as Indian meal, and his rough, ill-shaven cheeks and pale eyes reminded the priest of the country in which Pat lived, and of the four acres of land at the end of the boreen that Pat had been digging these many years.

He had come to ask Father Oliver if he would marry him for a pound, but, as Father Oliver didn't answer him, he fell to thinking that it was his clothes that the priest was admiring, "for hadn't his reverence given him the clothes himself? And if it weren't for the self-same clothes he wouldn't have the pound in his pocket to give the priest to marry him."

"It was yourself, your reverence——"

"Yes, I remember very well."

Pat had come to tell him that there was work to be

had in Tinnick, but he didn't dare to show himself in Tinnick, not having any clothes to wear. He had stood humbly before the priest in a pair of corduroy trousers that hardly covered his nakedness.

And it was as Father Oliver stood examining and pitying his parishioner's poverty it had occurred to him that, if he were to buy two suits of clothes in Tinnick and give one to Pat Kearney, he might wrap the other one in a bundle, and place it on the rocks on the Joycetown side. It was not likely that the shopman in Tinnick would remember, after three months, that he had sold two suits to the priest; but should he remember this, the explanation would be that he had bought them for Pat Kearney. Now, looking at this poor man who had come to ask him if he would marry him for a pound, the priest was lost in wonder.

"So you're going to be married, Pat?"

And Pat, who hadn't spoken to anyone since the woman whose potatoes he had been digging had said she'd as soon marry him as another, began to chatter, and to ramble in his chatter. There was so much to tell that he did not know how to tell it. There was his rent and the woman's holding, for now they would have nine acres of land, money would be required to stock it, and he did not know if the bank would lend him the money. Perhaps the priest would help him to get it.

"But why did you come to me to marry you? Aren't you two miles nearer to Father Moran than you are to me?"

Pat hesitated, not liking to say that he would be hard

set to get round Father Moran. So he began to talk of the Egans and the Reans. For hadn't he heard, as he came up the street, that Mrs. Rean had stolen the child from Mrs. Egan, and had had it baptized by the minister? And he hoped to obtain the priest's sympathy by saying:

"What a terrible thing it was that the police should allow a black Protestant to steal a Catholic child, and its mother a Catholic and all her people before her!"

"When Mrs. Rean snatched the child, it hadn't been baptized, and was neither a Catholic nor a Protestant," the priest said maliciously.

Pat Kearney, whose theological knowledge did not extend very far, remained silent, and the priest was glad of his silence, for he was thinking that in a few minutes he would catch sight of the square whitewashed schoolhouse on the hillside by the pine wood. The day being Saturday the school was empty. He had thought he would like to see again the place where he and Rose had stood talking together; but a long field lay between the road past the schoolhouse and the road past the priest's house, and what would it avail him to see the empty room? He looked, instead, for the hawthorn bush by which he and Rose had lingered, and it was a sad pleasure to think how she had gone up the road after bidding him good-by.

But Pat Kearney had begun to talk again of how he could get an advance from the bank.

"I can back no bill for you, Pat, but I'll give you a letter to Father Moran telling him that you can't afford to pay more than a pound."

Rose's letters were in the drawer of his writing table; he unlocked it, and put the packet into his pocket, and when he had scribbled a little note to Father Moran, he said:

"Now take this and be off with you; I've other business to attend to besides you;" and he called to Catherine for his towels.

"Now, is it out bathing you're going, your reverence? You won't be swimming out to Castle Island, and forgetting that you have confessions at seven?"

"I shall be back in time," he answered testily.

Halfway down the hillside his steps slackened, and he began to regret his irritation; for he would never see Catherine again. . . . It was a pity he had answered her testily. But he couldn't go back; he must think where he could hide himself. And he must find a safe hiding. Moran might call. Catherine might send Moran after him, saying his reverence had gone down to bathe, or any parishioner, however unwarranted his errand, might try to seek him out. "And all errands will be unwarranted to-day," he said as he hurried along the shore, thinking of the different paths round the rocks and through the blackthorn bushes.

His mind was on the big wood; there he could dodge anyone following him, for while his pursuer would be going round one way he would be coming back the other. But it would be lonely in the big wood; and as he hurried down the old cart track he thought how he might while away an hour among the ferns in the little spare fields at the end of the plantation, watching the sunset, for

hours would have to pass before the moon rose, and the time would pass slowly under the melancholy hazel thickets into which the sun had not looked for thousands of years. A wood had always been there. The Welshmen had felled trees in it to build rafts and boats to reach their island castles. Bears and wolves had been slain in it, and thinking how it was still a refuge for foxes, marten cats, and badgers, how infested it was with hawks, he made his way along the shore through the rough fields. He ran a little, and after waiting awhile ran on again. On reaching the edge of the wood he hid himself behind a bush, and did not dare to move, lest there might be some one about. It was not till he made sure there was no one that he stooped under the blackthorns, and followed a trail, thinking the animal, probably a badger, had its den under the old stones; and to pass the time he sought for a den, but could find none.

A small bird, a wren, was picking among the moss; every now and then it fluttered a little way, stopped, and picked again. "Now, what instinct guided its search for worms?" he asked, and getting up he followed the bird, but it escaped into a thicket. There were only hazel stems in the interspace he had chosen to hide himself in, but there were thickets nearly all about it, and it took some time to find a path through these. After a time one was found, and its many windings followed. By noticing everything he would pass the time, and make himself secure against being surprised.

The path soon came to an end, and he walked round to the other side of the wood, to see if the bushes were

thick enough to prevent anyone from coming upon him suddenly from that side; and when all investigations were finished—there was really very little to investigate—he came back, thinking of what his future life would be. He had proposed to spend his long vigil thinking of Rose, but he could only think of himself, and he dreaded personal meditation, feeling that if he did not restrain his thoughts within the circle of present circumstance, if he did not fix them on external things, his courage—or should he say his will?—would desert him. For, when all was said and done, it did not require much courage to swim across a lake, especially if one were a good swimmer, and he was an excellent one. It required far more courage to leave the parish. But to swim across the lake was a leave-taking; he couldn't return home in a frieze coat and a pair of corduroy trousers. Catherine's face when she saw him! But of what use thinking of these things? He was going; everything was settled. If he could only restrain his thoughts—they were as wild as bees.

Standing by a hazel stem, his hand upon a bough, he fell to thinking what his life would be, and very soon becoming implicated in a dream, he lost consciousness of time and place, and was borne away as by a current; he floated down his future life, seeing his garret room more clearly than he had ever seen it—his bed, his washhand-stand, and the little table on which he did his writing. No doubt most of it would be done in the office, but some of it would be done at home; and at nightfall he would descend from his garret like a bat from the eaves.

Journalists flutter like bats about newspaper offices. The bats haunt the same eaves, but the journalist drifts from city to city, from county to county, busying himself with ideas that were not his yesterday, and will not be his to-morrow. An interview with a statesman is followed by a review of a book, and the day after he may be thousands of miles away, describing a great flood or a railway accident. The journalist throws himself down to rest in an inn. He has no time to make friends, and he lives in no place long enough to know it intimately; passing acquaintance and exterior aspects of things are his share of the world. And it was in quest of such vagrancy of ideas and affections—the idealism of the tramp—that he was going.

At that moment a sudden sound in the wood startled him from his reverie, and he peered, a scared expression on his face, certain that the noise he had heard was Father Moran's footstep. It was but a hare lolloping through the underwood, and wondering at the disappointment he felt, he asked if he were disappointed that Moran had not come again to stop him. He didn't think he was, only the course of his life had been so long dependent on a single act of will that a hope had begun in his mind that some outward event might decide his fate for him. Last month he was full of courage, his nerves were like iron; to-day he was a poor vacillating creature, walking in a hazel wood, uncertain lest delay had taken the savor out of his adventure, his attention distracted by the sounds of the wood, by the snapping of a dry twig, by a leaf falling through the branches.

"Time is passing," he said, "and I must decide whether I go to America to write newspaper articles, or stay at home to say Mass—a simple matter, surely."

The ordinary newspaper article he thought he could do as well as another—in fact, he knew he could. But could he hope that in time his mind would widen and deepen, and that he might be able to write something worth writing, something that might win her admiration? Perhaps when he had shed all his opinions. Many had gone already, more would follow, and one day he would be as free as she was. She had been a great intellectual stimulus, and soon he began to wonder how it was that all the paraphernalia of religion interested him no longer, how he seemed to have suddenly outgrown the things belonging to the ages of faith, and the subtle question, if passion were essential to the growth of the mind, arose. For it seemed to him that his mind had grown, though he had not read the Scriptures, and he doubted if the reading of the Scriptures would have taught him as much as Rose's beauty. "After all," he said, "woman's beauty is more important to the world than a scroll." He had begun to love and to put his trust in what was natural, spontaneous in structure, and might succeed in New York better than he expected. But he would not like to think that it was hope of literary success that tempted him from Garranard. He would like to think that in leaving his poor people he was serving their best interests, and this was surely the case. For hadn't he begun to feel that what they needed was a really efficient priest, one who would look after their temporal interests?

In Ireland the priest is a temporal as well as a spiritual need. Who else would take an interest in this forlorn Garranard and its people, the reeds and rushes of existence?

He had striven to get the Government to build a bridge, but had lost patience; he had wearied of the task. Certain priests he knew would not have wearied of it; they would have gone on heckling the Government and the different boards until the building of the bridge could no longer be resisted. His failure to get this bridge was typical, and it proved beyond doubt that he was right in thinking he had no aptitude for the temporal direction of his parish.

But a curate had once lived in Bridget Clery's cottage who had served his people excellently well, had intrigued successfully, and forced the Government to build houses and advance money for drainage and other useful works. And this curate had served his people in many capacities—as scrivener, land valuer, surveyor, and engineer. It was not till he came to Garranard that he seemed to get out of touch with practical affairs, and he began to wonder if it was the comfortable house he lived in, if it were the wine he drank, the cigars he smoked, that had produced this degeneracy, if it were degeneracy. Or was it that he had worn out a certain side of his nature in Bridget Clery's cottage? It might well be that. Many a man has mistaken a passing tendency for a vocation. We all write poetry in the beginning of our lives; but most of us leave off writing poetry after some years, unless the instinct is a very deep one or one

is a fool. It might well be that his philanthropic instincts were exhausted; and it might well be that this was not the case, for one never gets at the root of one's nature.

The only thing he was sure of was that he had changed a great deal, and, he thought, for the better. He seemed to himself a much more real person than he was a year ago, being now in full possession of his soul, and surely the possession of one's soul is a great reality. By the soul he meant a special way of feeling and seeing. But the soul is more than that—it is a light; and this inner light, faint at first, had not been blown out. If he had blown it out, as many priests had done, he would not have experienced any qualms of conscience. The other priests in the diocese experienced none when they drove erring women out of their parishes, and the reason of this was that they followed a light from without, deliberately shutting out the light of the soul.

The question interested him, and he pondered it a long while, finding himself at last forced to conclude that there is no moral law except one's own conscience, and that the moral obligation of every man is to separate the personal conscience from the impersonal conscience. By the impersonal conscience he meant the opinions of others, traditional beliefs, and the rest; and thinking of these things he wandered round the Druid stones, and when his thoughts returned to Rose's special case he seemed to understand that if any other priest had acted as he had acted he would have acted rightly, for in driving a sinful woman out of the parish he would be giving expression to the moral law as he understood it and as

Garranard understood it. This primitive code of morals was all Garranard could understand in its present civilization, and any code is better than no code. Of course, if the priest were a transgressor himself he could not administer the law. Happily, that was a circumstance that did not arise often. So it was said; but what did he know of the souls of the priests with whom he dined, smoked pipes, and played cards? And he stopped, surprised, for it had never occurred to him that all a man knows only of his fellow is whether he be clean or dirty, short or tall, thin or stout. "Even the soul of Moran is obscure to me," he said—"obscure as this wood;" and at that moment the mystery of the wood seemed to deepen, and he stood for a long while looking through the twilight of the hazels.

Very likely many of the priests he knew had been tempted by women; some had resisted temptation, and some had sinned and repented. There might be a priest who had sinned and lived for years in sin; even so if he didn't leave his parish, if he didn't become an apostate priest, faith would return to him in the end. But the apostate priest is anathema in the eyes of the Church; the doctrine always has been that a sin matters little if the sinner repent. Father Oliver suddenly saw himself years hence, still in Garranard, administering the sacraments, and faith returning like an incoming tide, covering the weedy shore, lapping round the high rock of doubt. If he desired faith, all he had to do was to go on saying Mass, hearing confessions, baptizing the young, burying the old, and in twenty years—maybe it would take thirty

—when his hair was white and his skin shriveled, he would be again a good priest, beloved by his parishioners, and carried in the fullness of time by them to the green churchyard where Father Peter lay near the green pines.

Only the other day, coming home from his afternoon's walk, he had stopped to admire his house. The long shadow of its familiar trees had awakened an extraordinary love in him, and when he had crossed the threshold and sat down in his armchair, his love for his house had surprised him, and he sat like one enchanted by his own fireside, lost in admiration of the old mahogany bookcase with the inlaid panels, that he had bought at an auction. How somber and quaint it had looked, furnished with his books that he had had bound in Dublin, and what pleasure it always was to him to see a ray lighting up the parchment bindings! He had hung some engravings on his walls, and these had become very dear to him; and there were some spoons that he had bought at an auction some time ago—old, worn Georgian spoons—and his hands had become accustomed to them; and there was an old tea service, with flowers painted inside the cups, and his eyes had become accustomed to these flowers. He was leaving these things, and he didn't know exactly why he was leaving them. If he were going away to join Rose in America he could understand his going. But he would never see her again—at least, it was not probable that he would. He was not following her, but an idea, an abstraction, an opinion; he was separating himself, and forever, from his native land and his past life, and his quest was, alas! not her, but— He

was following what? Life? Yes; but what is life? Do we find life in adventure or by our own fireside? For all he knew he might be flying from the very thing he thought he was following.

Then his thoughts zigzagged, and, almost unaware of his thought, he compared life to a flower—to a flower that yields up its perfume only after long cultivation—and then to a wine that gains its fragrance only after it has been lying in the same cellar for many years, and he started up convinced that he must return home at once. But he had not taken many steps before he stopped:

"No, no, I cannot stay here year after year! I cannot stay here till I die, seeing that lake. . . . I couldn't bear it. I am going. It matters little to me whether life is to be found at home or abroad, in adventure or in habits and customs. One thing matters—do I stay or go?"

He turned into the woods and walked aimlessly, trying to escape from his thoughts, and to do so he admired the pattern of the leaves and the flight of the birds, and he pondered over the old stones that probably were once Druid altars. But these expedients were only partially successful, and he came back an hour after, walking slowly through the hazel stems, thinking that the law of change is the law of life. Drawing back the lower branches, he stood at the edge of the wood watching the cormorants coming down the glittering lake to their roost. With a flutter of wings they perched on the old castle, and his mind continued to formulate arguments, and the last always seemed the best.

At half-past seven he was thinking that life is gained by escaping from the past rather than by trying to retain it; he had begun to feel more and more sure that tradition is but dead flesh which we must cut off if we would live. . . . But just at this spot, an hour ago, he had acquiesced in the belief that if a priest continued to administer the sacraments faith would return to him; and no doubt the sacraments would bring about some sort of religious stupor, but not that sensible, passionate faith which he had once possessed, and which he remembered had not met the approval of the authorities at Maynooth. He had said that in flying from the monotony of tradition he would find only another monotony, and a worse one—that of adventure; and no doubt the journalist's life is made up of fugitive interests. But every man has, or should have, an intimate life as well as an external life; and in losing interest in religion he had lost the intimate life which the priesthood had once given him. The Mass had become a mere Latin formula, and the vestments and the chalice, the Host itself, a sort of fetichism—that is to say, a symbolism from which life had departed, the shells retaining hardly a murmur of the ancient ecstasy. It was therefore indispensable that he should go in quest of—what? Not of adventure. He preferred to think that his quest was the personal life—that intimate exaltation that comes to him who has striven to be himself, and nothing but himself. The life he was going to might lead him even to a new faith. Religious forms arise and die. The Catholic Church had very likely come to the end of its thread; the spool

seemed pretty well emptied. He sat down so that he might think better what the new faith might be. What would be its first principle? he asked himself. Not finding any answer to this question, he began to think of his life in America. He would begin as a mere recorder of passing events. But why should he assume that he would not rise higher? And if he remained to the end of his day a humble reporter, he would still have the supreme satisfaction of knowing that he had not resigned himself body and soul to the life of the pool, to a froglike acquiescence in the stagnant pool.

His hand still held back the hazel branch, but there seemed to have been a long interval, during which no single thought had crossed his mind—at least, none that he could remember. No doubt his tired mind had fallen into lethargy, from which a sudden fear had roughly awakened him. What if some countryman, seeking his goats among the rocks, had happened upon the bundle and taken it home! And at once he imagined himself climbing up the rocks naked. Pat Kearney's cabin was close by, but Pat had no clothes except those on his back, and would have to go round the lake to Garranard; and the priest thought how he would sit naked in Kearney's cottage hour after hour.

"If anyone comes to the cabin I shall have to hold the door to. There is a comic side to every adventure," he said, "and a more absurd one it would be difficult to imagine."

The day had begun in a ridiculous adventure—the

baptism of the poor child, baptized first a Protestant, then a Catholic. And he laughed a little, and then he sighed.

"Is the whole thing a fairy tale, a piece of midsummer madness, I wonder? No matter, I can't stay here, so why should I trouble to discover a reason for my going? In America I shall be living a life in agreement with God's instincts. My quest is life."

And, remembering some words in her last letter, his heart cried out that his love must bring her back to him eventually, though Ellis were to take her to the end of the earth. He was carried quickly beyond the light of common sense into a dim, happy world where all things came and went or were transformed in obedience to his unexpressed will. Whether the sun were curtained by leafage or by silken folds he did not know—only this: that she was coming toward him, borne lightly as a ball of thistledown. He perceived the color of her hair and eyes and hands and of the pale dress she wore; but her presence seemed revealed to him through the exaltation of some sense latent or nonexistent in him in his waking moods. His delight was of the understanding, for they neither touched hands nor spoke. A little surprise rose to the surface of his rapture—surprise at the fact that he experienced no pang of jealousy. She had said that true love could not exist without jealousy! But was she right in this? It seemed to him that we begin to love when we cease to judge. If she were different she wouldn't be herself, and it was herself he loved—the mystery of her sunny, singing nature. There is no

judgment where there is perfect sympathy, and he understood that it would be as vain for him to lament that her eyebrows were fair as to lament or reprove her conduct.

Continuing the same train of thought, he remembered that, though she was young to-day, she would pass into middle, maybe old, age; that the day would come when her hair would be less bright, her figure would lose its willowness; but these changes would not lessen his love for her. Should he not welcome change? Thinking that perhaps fruit time is better than blossom time, he foresaw a deeper love awaiting him, and a tenderness that to-day he could not feel he would enjoy in years to come. Nor could habit blunt his perceptions or intimacy unravel the mystery of her sunny nature. So the bourne could never be reached; for when everything had been said, something would remain unspoken. The two rhythms out of which the music of life is made, intimacy and adventure, would meet, would merge, and become one; and she, who was to-day an adventure, would become in the end the home of his affections.

A great bird swooped out of the branches above him, startling him, and he cried out: "An owl—only an owl!" The wood was quiet and dark, and in fear he groped his way to the old stones; for one thing still remained to be done before he left—he must burn her letters.

And he burnt them one by one, shielding the flame with his hand lest it should attract some passer-by. When the last was burnt he feared no longer; his won-

der was why he had hesitated, why his mind had been torn by doubt. At the back of his mind he had always known he was going. Had he not written saying he was going, and wasn't that enough? And he thought for a moment of what her opinion of him would be if he stayed in Garranard. In a cowardly moment he had hoped that something would happen to save him from the ultimate decision, and now he was glad that he had overcome doubt without the extraneous help of the memory of the promise he had made her.

A yellow disk appeared, cutting the flat sky sharply, and he laid his priest's clothes in the middle of a patch of white sand where they could be easily seen. He placed the Roman collar upon the top, and, stepping from stone to stone, he stood on the last one as on a pedestal, tall and gray in the moonlight—buttocks hard as a faun's, and dimpled like a faun's when he draws himself up before plunging after a nymph.

When he emerged he was among the reeds, shaking the water from his face and hair. The night was so warm that it was like swimming in a bath, and when he had swum a quarter of a mile he turned over on his back to see the moon shining. Then he turned over to see how near he was to the island. "Too near," he thought, for he had started before his time. But he might delay a little on the island, and he walked up the shore, his blood in happy circulation, his flesh and brain a-tingle, a little captivated by the vigor of his muscles, and ready and anxious to plunge into the water on the other side, to tire himself if he could, in the

mile and a half of gray lake that lay between him and shore.

There were lights in every cottage window; the villagers would be about the roads for an hour or more, and it would be well to delay on the island, and he chose a high rock to sit upon. His hand ran the water off his long thighs, and then off his long, thin arms, and he watched the laggard moon rising slowly in the dusky night, like a duck from the marshes. Supporting himself with one arm, he let himself down the rock and dabbled his foot in the water, and the splashing of the water reminded him of little Philip Rean, who had been baptized twice that morning notwithstanding his loud protest. Now one of his baptizers had been baptized, and by emersion he had experienced great benefit from the sacrament, and in a few minutes he would plunge again into the beneficent flood. The night was so still and warm that it was happiness to be naked, and he thought he could sit for hours on that rock without feeling cold, watching the red moon rolling up through the trees round Tinnick; and when the moon turned from red to gold he wondered how it was that the mere brightening of the moon could put such joy into a man's heart.

Derrinrush was the nearest shore, and far away in the wood he heard a fox bark. "On the trail of some rabbit," he thought, and again he admired the great gold moon rising heavily through the dusky sky, and the lake formless and spectral beneath.

Catherine no doubt had begun to feel agitated; she would be walking about at midnight, too scared to go

to sleep. He was sorry for her; perhaps she would be the only one who would prefer to hear he was in America and doing well than at the bottom of the lake. Eliza would regret in a way, as much as her administration of the convent would allow her; Mary would pray for him—so would Eliza, for the matter of that; and their prayers would come easily, thinking him dead. Poor women! if only for their peace of mind he would undertake the second half of the crossing.

A long mile of water lay between him and Joycetown, but there was a courage he had never felt before in his heart, and a strength he had never felt before in his limbs. Once he stood up in the water, sorry that the crossing was not longer. "Perhaps I shall have had enough of it before I get there;" and he turned on his side and swam half a mile before changing his stroke. He changed it and got on his back because he was beginning to feel cold and tired, and soon after he began to think that it would be about as much as he could do to reach the shore. A little later he was swimming frog fashion, and it was a disappointment to see that the shore was still a long way off. For now he was like one paralyzed, but he struggled on. At last the water shallowed; he had come to the end of his strength, and as he clambered up the rocks he said: "Another hundred yards would have done for me." He was so cold that he could not think, and sought his clothes vaguely, sitting down to rest from time to time. He didn't know for certain if he would find them, and if he didn't he must die of cold. So the rough shirt was very wel-

come when he found it, and so were the woolen socks. As soon as he was dressed he thought that he felt nearly strong enough to climb up the rocks, but he was not as strong as he thought, and it took him a long time to get to the top. But at the top the sward was pleasant—it was the sward of the terrace of the old house; and lying at length, fearful lest sleep might overtake him, he looked across the lake. "A queer dusky night," he said, "with hardly a star, and that great moon pouring silver down the lake." He could hear the lake's warble, "singing," he said, "in the dim silence, and the lake shadowy and distant as my past life."

In another twenty minutes he was sufficiently rested to undertake the walk to Tinnick, and getting to his feet, he buckled the strap tighter about his waist.

"I shall never see that lake again, but I shall never forget it," he said, as he plodded along the road a little dazed, hardly aware of the fields and the trees and the gable ends of the houses that he knew so well.

As he dozed in the train, in a corner of an empty carriage, the spectral light of the lake awoke him, and when he arrived at Cork it seemed to him that he was being engulfed in the deep pool by the Joycetown shore. On the deck of the steamer he heard the lake's warble above the violence of the waves. "There is a lake in every man's heart," he said, clinging to a wet rope; he added, "And every man must ungird his loins for the crossing."

THE END

(1)

The Reckoning.

By ROBERT W. CHAMBERS.

The author's intention is to treat, in a series of four or five romances, that part of the war for independence which particularly affected the great landed families of northern New York, the Johnsons, represented by Sir William, Sir John, Guy Johnson, and Colonel Claus; the notorious Butlers, father and son, the Schuylers, Van Rensselaers, and others.

The first romance of the series, Cardigan, was followed by the second, The Maid-at-Arms. The third, in order, is not completed. The fourth is the present volume.

As Cardigan pretended to portray life on the baronial estate of Sir William Johnson, the first uneasiness concerning the coming trouble, the first discordant note struck in the harmonious councils of the Long House, so, in The Maid-at-Arms, which followed in order, the author attempted to paint a patroon family disturbed by the approaching rumble of battle. That romance dealt with the first serious split in the Iroquois Confederacy; it showed the Long House shattered though not fallen; the demoralization and final flight of the great landed families who remained loyal to the British Crown; and it struck the key-note to the future attitude of the Iroquois toward the patriots of the frontier—revenge for their losses at the battle of Oriskany—and ended with the march of the militia and continental troops on Saratoga.

The third romance, as yet incomplete and unpublished, deals with the war-path and those who followed it led by the landed gentry of Tryon County; and ends with the first solid blow delivered at the Long House, and the terrible punishment of the Great Confederacy.

The present romance, the fourth in chronological order, picks up the thread at that point.

The author is not conscious of having taken any liberties with history in preparing a framework of facts for a mantle of romance.

ROBERT W. CHAMBERS.

NEW YORK, *May 26, 1904.*

WORKS OF ROBERT W. CHAMBERS.

IOLE

Colored inlay on the cover, decorative borders, head-pieces, thumb-nail sketches, and tail-pieces. Frontispiece and three full-page illustrations. 12mo. Ornamental Cloth, $1.25.

Does anybody remember the opera of The Inca, and that heart-breaking episode where the Court Undertaker, in a morbid desire to increase his professional skill, deliberately accomplishes the destruction of his middle-aged relatives in order to inter them for the sake of practice?

If I recollect, his dismal confession runs something like this:

"It was in bleak November
When I slew them, I remember,
As I caught them unawares
Drinking tea in rocking-chairs."

And so he talked them to death, the subject being "What Really Is Art?" Afterward he was sorry—

"The squeak of a door,
The creak of a floor,
My horrors and fears enhance;
And I wake with a scream
As I hear in my dream
The shrieks of my maiden aunts!"

Now it is a very dreadful thing to suggest that those highly respectable pseudo-spinsters, the Sister Arts, supposedly cozily immune in their polygamous chastity (for every suitor for favor is popularly expected to be wedded to his particular art)—I repeat, it is very dreadful to suggest that these impeccable old ladies are in danger of being talked to death.

But the talkers are talking and Art Nouveau rockers are rocking, and the trousers of the prophet are patched with stained glass, and it is a day of dinkiness and of thumbs.

Let us find comfort in the ancient proverb: "Art talked to death shall rise again." Let us also recollect that "Dinky is as dinky does;" that "All is not Shaw that Bernards;" that "Better Yeates than Clever;" that words are so inexpensive that there is no moral crime in robbing Henry to pay James.

Firmly believing all this, abjuring all atom-pickers, slab furniture, and woodchuck literature—save only the immortal verse:

"And there the wooden-chuck doth tread;
While from the oak trees' tops
The red, red squirrel on the head
The frequent acorn drops."

Abjuring, as I say, dinkiness in all its forms, we may still hope that those cleanly and respectable spinsters, the Sister Arts, will continue throughout the ages, rocking and drinking tea unterrified by the million-tongued clamor in the back yard and below stairs, where thumb and forefinger continue the question demanded by intellectual exhaustion:

"*L'art! Kesker say l'art?*"

D. APPLETON AND COMPANY, PUBLISHERS, NEW YORK.

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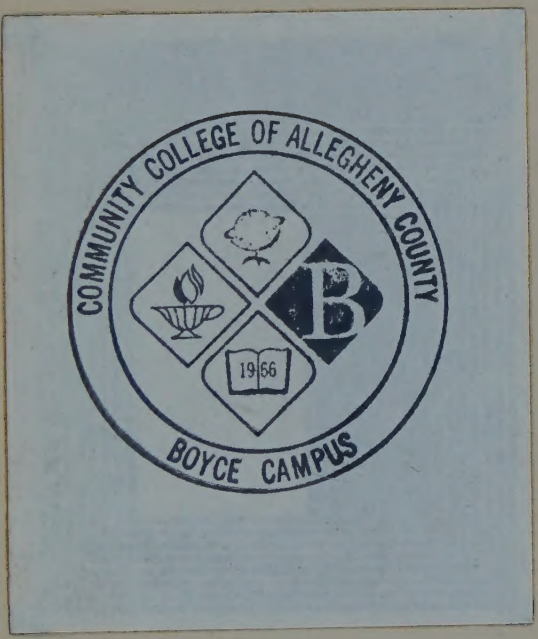
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